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OCTOBER 1999



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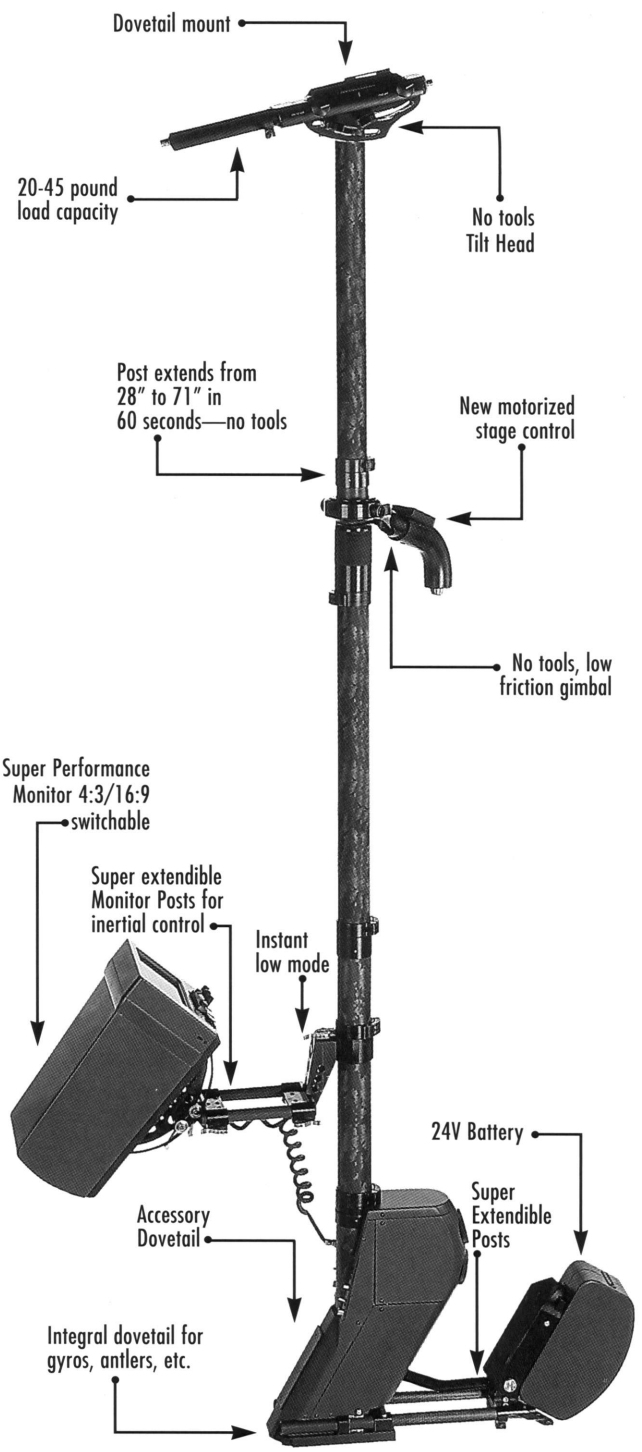
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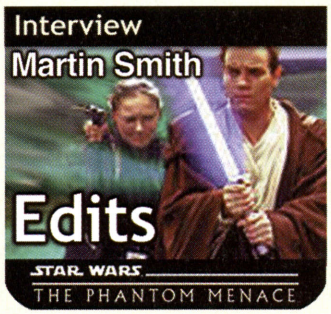
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Editing News

Updated: Friday July 16, 1999 at 12:50 PM PDT

Discreet Ships Edit* 5.0

Discreet is now shipping version 5.0 of edit*, its Windows NT-based non-linear editing system. Edit* 5.0 features an integrated audio and video finishing toolset capable of supporting uncompressed image quality and a wide range of compressed resolutions; multi-cam and Apple QuickTime 3.0 support.

Fri Jul 16, 1999, 12:50 PM PDT

'Tarzan' To Screen Digitally

Walt Disney Pictures' new animated feature, "Tarzan," will begin a digital exhibition run at three theaters next week. Whereas "Star Wars: Episode I -- The Phantom Menace" and "An Ideal Husband" recently screened digitally, both were originally shot on film. "Tarzan" will become the first major release to be produced, mastered and projected digitally. "Tarzan" will screen July 23 at AMC's Pleasure Island multiplex at Walt Disney World in Orlando, the AMC Media Center North 6 in Burbank and Edwards Spectrum complex in Irvine, CA.

Fri Jul 16, 1999, 9:55 AM PDT

Jobs News

Unstoppable Pacific Productions (San Jose, CA) is seeking a versatile **Off-Line Editor** with digital/video film experience for the low-budget feature "The Judas Curse"...

Regent Entertainment (Los Angeles, CA) is seeking **Film Editor** with Canadian citizenship and action film editing experience...

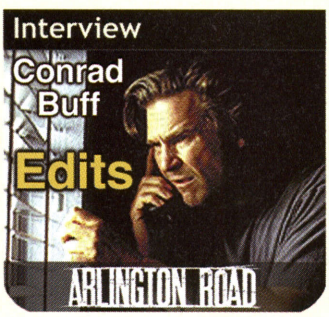
Cornerbrook Films (Irvine, CA) is seeking an **Off-Line Editor** for 35mm film "Two Left Turns"...

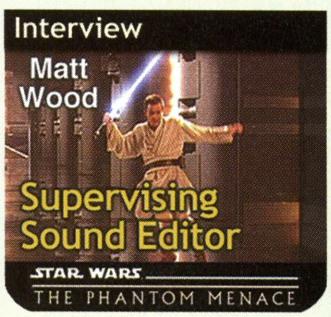
Atlas Media Corporation (New York) is seeking **Off-Line and On-Line Avid Editors** for freelance editing work on fast-paced, magazine-type series and an archival documentary series for basic cable...

Mainframe Entertainment (Vancouver, B.C.) is looking for credited **Film Editor** with digital non-linear experience...

More Jobs News







BAVC Offers Training

Bay Area Video Coalition (BAVC) has joined forces with the State of California to provide advanced training to full-time employees in the [illegible] industries, at no cost to employers or the [illegible]. BAVC will provide four certified tracks of training: Avid editing, digital post-production, video production and media. (editing)

Tuesday July 6, 1999



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American Cinematographer

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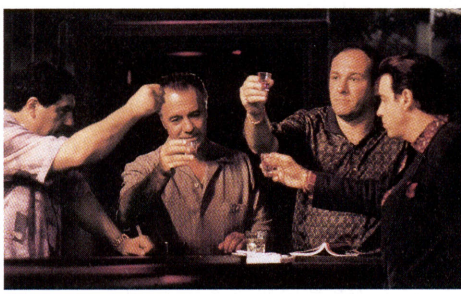
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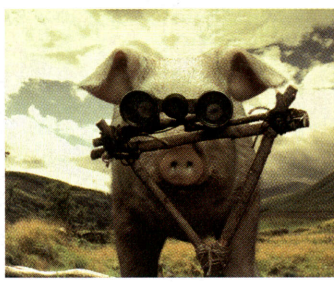
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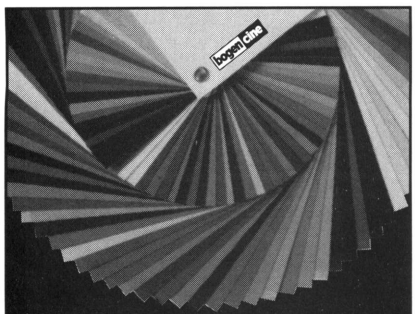
On Our Cover: Dr. William Harford (Tom Cruise) is about to discover that his wife, Alice (Nicole Kidman), harbors a dark secret in *Eyes Wide Shut*, a psychosexual thriller directed by the late Stanley Kubrick and photographed by Larry Smith (photo by Manuel Harlan, courtesy of Warner Bros.).

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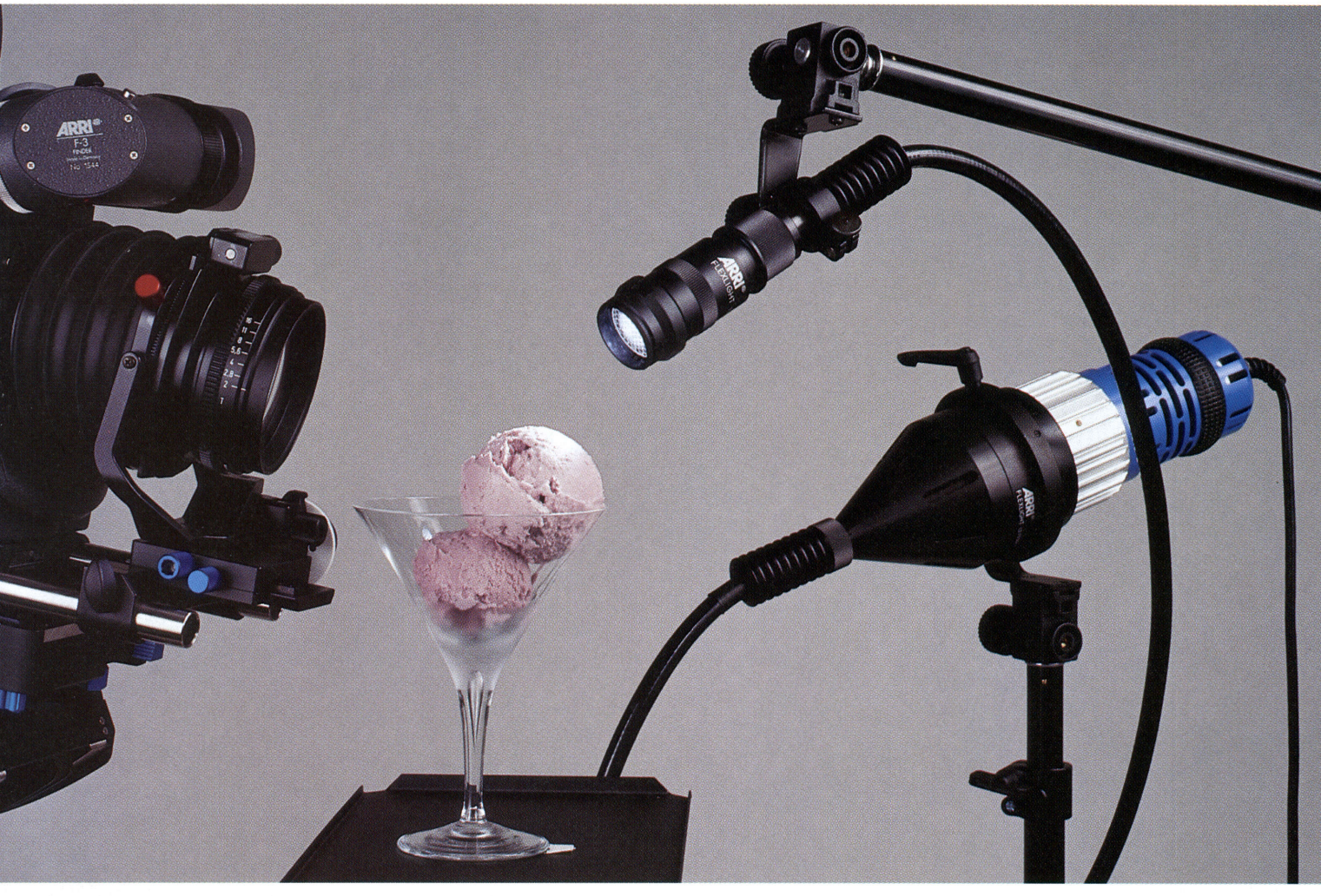
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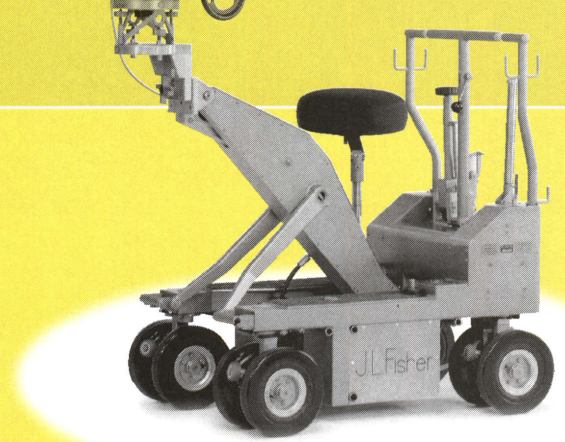
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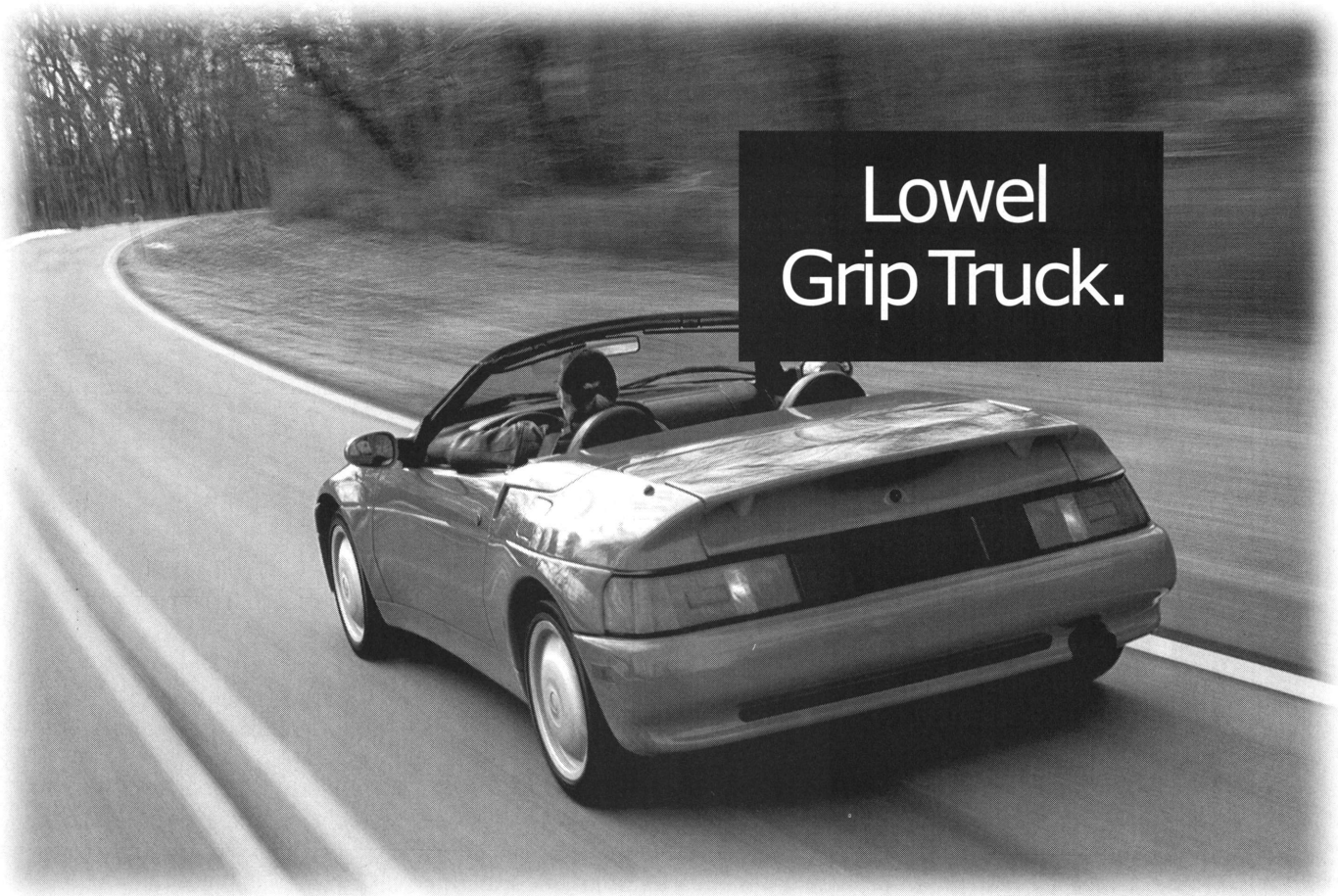
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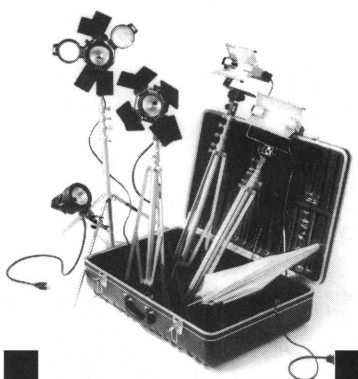
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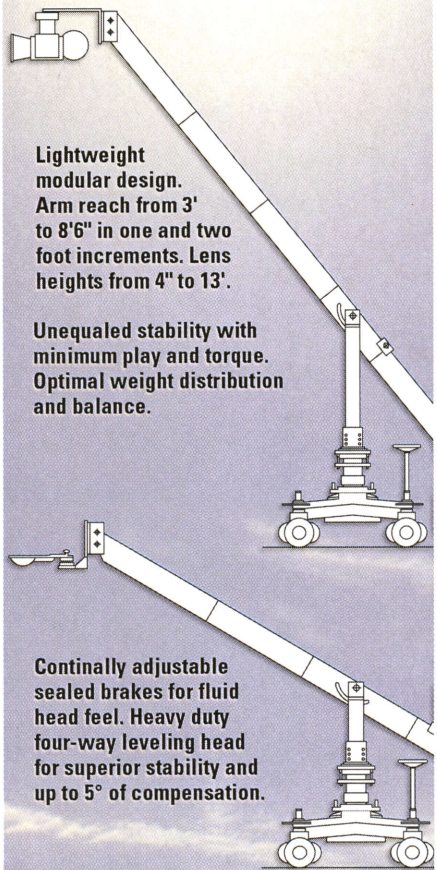
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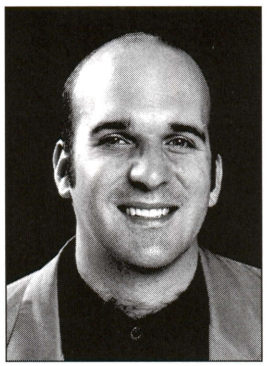
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Editor's Note



Over the course of his long and illustrious career, Stanley Kubrick came to be known as the "world's greatest living director." The enigmatic auteur quietly abdicated that throne last March 7, when he passed away in his sleep at the age of 70. He left behind one final film for cinephiles to absorb: *Eyes Wide Shut,* a psychosexual thriller starring Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman.

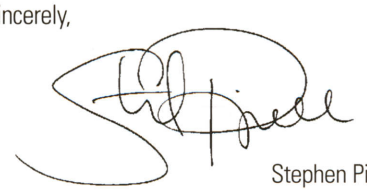
Like all of Kubrick's previous films, *Eyes* has generated a good deal of debate. In cinematography circles, the hot topic has been the picture's unusual look, which resulted from the filmmaker's decision to shoot with a bare minimum of "movie lights," and to rely instead upon practical sources and force-developed film stock. In this month's cover story ("A Sword in the Bed," page 28), the project's director of photography, Larry Smith, offers his own insights into Kubrick's use of this unorthodox strategy.

A notorious perfectionist, Kubrick made a strong impression on everyone he worked with over the years. In an effort to shed some light on the late director's methods and unique personality, *AC*'s Ron Magid burned up the phone lines to interview some of his key collaborators. Their revealing and sometimes surprising comments ("Quest for Perfection," page 40) will surely put to rest some of the myths that surrounded this intensely private man.

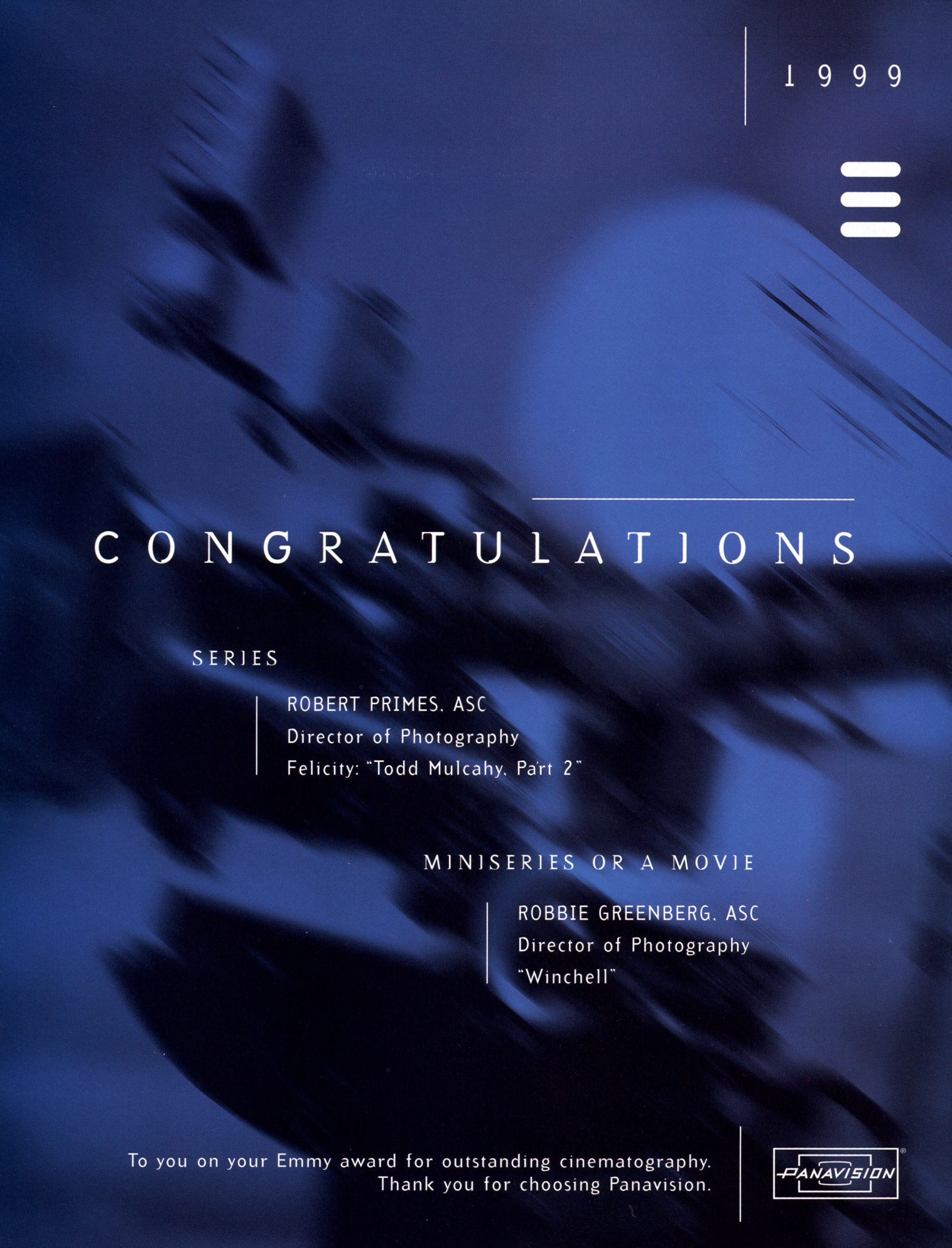
As a further tribute to the master filmmaker, Kubrick biographer Vincent LoBrutto has penned a detailed historical piece on one of his most controversial films, *A Clockwork Orange* ("The Old Ultra-Violence," page 52). Released in 1971, this truly disturbing work was subsequently banned in England by Kubrick himself, after the director was dismayed to learn that several copycat killers had drawn inspiration from the story's violent premise. Nearly three decades later, *Clockwork* has lost none of its power to shock an audience. Indeed, all of Kubrick's films are likely to stand the test of time, which is the truest measure of a filmmaker's greatness.

This issue of *AC* also presents a look at some of this season's finest television fare: the critically acclaimed HBO series *The Sopranos* ("Mob Psychology," page 62), as well as the telefilms *Animal Farm* ("A Battle for the Barn," page 72) and *RKO 281* ("Raising Kane," page 82). In addition, we've included a special section, beginning on page 91, that salutes the 50th Anniversary of the British Society of Cinematographers. Here's wishing the chaps across the pond our heartiest congratulations and many more years of success.

Sincerely,



Stephen Pizzello
Executive Editor


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Covert Camerawork

by Mark Dillon and David E. Williams

The Showtime production *In the Company of Spies* trails retired CIA operative Kevin Jefferson (Tom Berenger) as he returns to the fold after the Korean Internal Service detains Marko (Karl Pruner), a former case officer of Jefferson's who could prevent a global terrorist act. CIA director Tom Lenahan (Ron Silver) believes that Jefferson is the best man to determine what Marko knows and rescue him. Allowed to work independently of Agency bureaucracy, Jefferson accepts the assignment and sets up a secret team in the bowels of CIA headquarters.

Although this cloak-and-dagger story is set in Washington, D.C., at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia, and in North Korea, all 22 days of principal photography were completed in Toronto, Canada. During *AC*'s visit to the production, the crew was filming a crucial final scene within Jefferson's HQ — nicknamed the "Blue Sky Operations Center" — which was set up in the basement of a suburban Toronto office building.

The four members of the fictional Blue Sky team each had their own computer console, beyond which was a tower of 20 TV monitors. Gelled fluorescent tubes fixed to the wall behind set lent a green tint to the team's map room, while the lair's main section was lit with Par cans, Source Fours and Leikos hanging from an overhead grid. What resulted was an uncommonly dark set accented by pools of light that cast hot highlights on the actors as they passed beneath the lamps.

Director Tim Matheson, the veteran actor whose behind-the-camera career includes several episodes of *St. Elsewhere*, enlisted Roy Wagner, ASC as his cinematographer on *In the Company of Spies,* partly due to the latter's reputation for achieving distinct visuals in rapid fashion.

The cameraman's many credits include the pilots to *Beauty and the Beast* and *Quantum Leap* (which earned him Emmy Awards) and the mini-series *Drug Wars: The Enrique Camarena Story* (Emmy and ASC Awards), as well as the series *Party of Five*, the upcoming theatrical feature *A Rumor of Angels*, and the current Fox series *Get Real.*

Wagner was impressed with his Canadian crew's ability to do solid work in short order. "It was odd for me because I went to Toronto as an outsider," he explains. "We were doing an average of 30, sometimes 50 setups a day, which is easy if you're working with your regular crew, because you can use a kind of shorthand. But we'd never worked together before.





Seeking a location to represent the interior of a federal office, cameraman Roy Wagner, ASC suggested using a multi-storied structure that was under repair. "By using the existing scaffolding for our HMI lighting, we saved ourselves a lot of rigging time," he says.

Images courtesy of Showtime and Roy Wagner, ASC.

high def·i·ni·tion (hī déf´ə-nĭsh ən) *n.*
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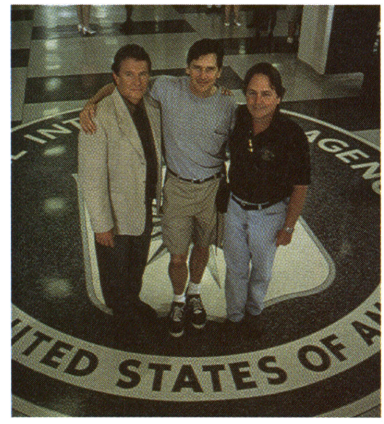
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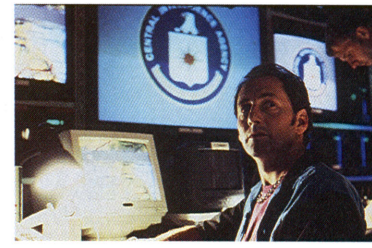
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Top: North Korean operatives wrest information from a captive. Above: The moody "Blue Sky" lair features visual punctuation from hot overhead lamps. Left: Actor Tom Berenger, director Tim Matheson and cameraman Roy Wagner.

"One of the things I discovered is that Toronto has a very small filmmaking community. Because of that, they have the sense of unity that we've sort of lost in Hollywood. Everybody knows each another, and there's the sense of everyone trying to experience something for the first time together. I didn't really expect to become a part of their community so quickly, but that proved to be important on this project.

"*In the Company of Spies* was initially a theatrical feature, but it went into turnaround and was picked up by Showtime. The script was thick and dense, but it was our job to turn the material into an inexpensive film on a short schedule. That meant we had to have a crew that really worked well together — and these guys were very good and very fast, and I like to work *very* fast.

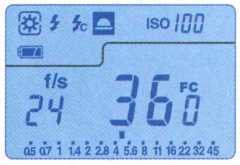
"This kind of situation forces people to work on their instincts, and you discover a lot about your strengths and weaknesses. Thoughtful filmmaking is good for certain projects, but I feel that the instinctual process is a great journey. Tim Matheson liked that as well, because he wanted to get a lot of coverage, so we did just that."

Preparedness was a key to accomplishing this goal. As Wagner notes, "One reason why I can work as quickly as I can is because I previsualize everything. A lot of cinematographers will test ideas out on the set, and if they don't like the results, they'll restructure and try again. That's great if you have the time, but I believe that the technical aspects of filmmaking are really an intrusion — in many ways — on the rest of the filmmaking process.

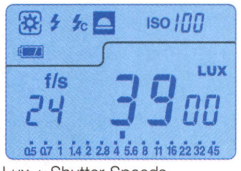
"It's vital to manifest all the technical things so that you make a good movie, but it's equally important that the actors, the director, and all of the other creative people are able to do their jobs as well. All too often, the technical side will take over, and there will be no time left to explore what's best for the film — to get another take, plan another shot, or

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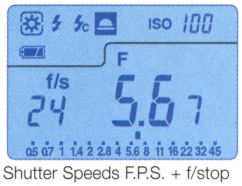
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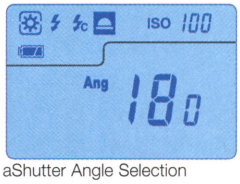
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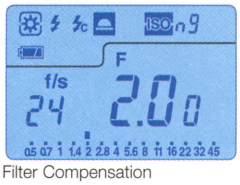
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get an extra scene. It's our job to accomplish our work as efficiently as we can. It's my responsibility to make sure the show looks good in the time given, and it's the director's responsibility to take as much time as he can to make sure each performance works."

Wagner's prep work includes intensive writing. For each scene in a screenplay, the cameraman effectively reinterprets the passage from a purely visual perspective, which he mainly derives from his instinctual feelings about the story during his first read-through. "Those are the impressions that are first lost as you go through the shot-by-shot production process," the cinematographer states. "During a day's work, things become so complex and technical that you can forget the original reason behind what you're trying to do, so I wanted to create a record of those first impressions that I could access later. By writing those thoughts out, I can further examine and define why I felt the way I did, both intellectually and emotionally. That can then translate into colors, an impression of how the light should fall on a character, or even camera movement."

Though Wagner initially devised his elaborate notation system some years ago primarily as a personal reference, a director once found him referring to it on the set, and asked if he could take a look. Impressed with its effectiveness, he asked the cameraman if he could get a copy for himself. Wagner says, "Some directors are protective of the creative process, but this particular person wasn't, and my system proved to be a useful tool for communicating our ideas. Some time later, I worked with Robert Altman, who suggested that I take pictures to go along with the text, so I did."

Using color photo-mosaic printouts of pictures that he shoots during location scouts, Wagner illustrates his intentions with precise notes. For instance, he might mark exactly how the blind on an office window should be positioned, or how ND material should be used to prevent it from burning out if the exposure is set at a certain stop. He can also note the start and end points for a camera move if needed. "Using pictures, I have a precise way of both remembering the situation we encountered on the set and communicating my ideas to the director and the rest of the crew. Altman loved that, and so did Tim Matheson on *In the Company of Spies*.

"This project was the first time I've given all of my notes and photos to anyone, but Tim is very thorough and prepared. By the time we got to the set, we had fully explored the various possibilities, which meant I'd been able to have a lot more input on the look of the project than I would have if we were trying to figure things out during production.

"Being fully prepared gives you the freedom to deviate from the planned course when something better arises. The crew also appreciates the sense of security that's created if the cinematographer is well-prepared and clear about what's going on."

Wagner also generates a list of which film stocks will be needed for every scene throughout the entire film. This helps him communicate to the production manager exactly what he needs for each shooting day, and ensures that there will be little leftover stock. "I like to use the complete dynamic range of a stock," Wagner explains, "so having the correct stock for a particular circumstance is important to me. However, this log isn't a 'bible' to follow, but a guideline." For the varying locations used on *In the Company of Spies,* Wagner utilized a mixture of Kodak's EXR 5248, Vision 250D 5246, and Vision 500T 5279.

To further increase production speed, Wagner frequently developed two cameras: a Panaflex Platinum and a GII, This approach may have been necessary due to a tight schedule, but Matheson also believes it better captures the dynamic between actors. "I can shoot with two cameras on one person, or on two separate people, which allows me to have more cutting options later on," the director notes. "It's also cost-effective; we've done more

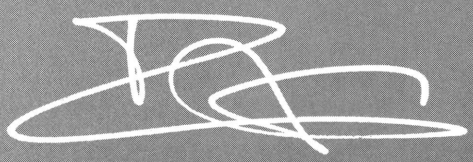
ON FILM

MARYSE ALBERTI

"I have been fortunate to work with auteur directors in both features and documentaries. Through documentaries, I have discovered the world and how privileged my place in it is. They teach me how to react emotionally to make an image with very simple tools – that the light of a single bulb is often very beautiful. Then features give me the tools to make sunshine when it's raining outside. I look for stories that have an edge and challenge me as a director of photography, and as an audience."

Maryse Alberti began her career as a self-taught still photographer who segued into documentary and narrative filmmaking and commercials. Her credits include *Zebrahead, Poison, Incident at Oglala, H2 Worker, Crumb, When We Were Kings, Velvet Goldmine* and *Happiness*. Her current project is *Joe Gould's Secret.*

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Two frame captures from the inventive documentary *Persistence of Vision*. Top: Subject Jack Cardiff, BSC discusses how he lit some of the cinema's greatest leading ladies. Bottom: Freddie Francis, BSC, who earned an Academy Award for his photography on Cardiff's directorial debut, *Sons and Lovers* (1960), interviews his longtime friend and colleague.

continue to shop for the best situation they can find. The feeling of community that exists in Canada is something we'll have to rediscover for ourselves."

Cardiff on Camera
by David E. Williams

Few cinematographers are accustomed to being in front of the camera. However, British ace Jack Cardiff, BSC, the recipient of the ASC's International Award in 1993, has recently received extensive onscreen attention as the subject of *Persistence of Vision*, a feature-length documentary that explores his career.

Director Craig McCall began this project soon after meeting Cardiff for the first time — during an impromptu discussion about the merits of spring-driven Bolex cameras. "Listening to Jack describe how a Bolex was the right camera for a project he was working on sparked something in me," McCall remembers. "Some cinematographers think they have to be shooting in Panavision to do 'important' work, but here was Jack deciding to use a Bolex. I rather liked that."

Cardiff later gave McCall a copy of the manuscript for his then-unpublished 1996 autobiography, *Magic Hour*. "It was fascinating, partly because I knew that Jack's story and anecdotes would be accessible to a very wide audience," McCall explains. "That inspired me to make this film."

McCall began the process by producing a short about Cardiff, a

setups per day than most companies do in two days, which gives me an opportunity to capture more pieces on film. I'm a firm believer in the Robert Rodriguez school of directing — give me a lot of pieces."

Matheson and his cast had little downtime for lighting changes while shooting on the Blue Sky Operations Center set, thanks to Wagner's overhead lighting scheme, which took 2½ hours to set up on the first day, but only required minor adjustments over the three subsequent shooting days. "Tim was always specific about what he wanted to do on each day, but those plans sometimes had to change at the last minute, perhaps because an actor wanted to do something else," Wagner says. "Because of the way we lit things, Tim could make those 90-degree turns without fear that it would cost time or money. For any artist, it's important to feel that you can explore a new path without jeopardy.

"That approach is great for actors, because they can move wherever they need to be. I'm not fond of forcing people to hit marks. My lighting is not broad or general, but allowing an actor to step out of the light may be that pathway of discovery. Perhaps the scene will be better, or say something different about their character, if they don't perfectly fall into the light. In short, if you take what you're given in terms of performances and locations, and then expand upon it, you're likely to explore those other avenues."

Wagner learned the art of lighting by training with some of Hollywood's great cameramen. He cites ASC legends Harry Stradling, Frank Phillips and Bill Fraker as valued mentors who were instrumental to both his education and his later acceptance into the Hollywood establishment. Wagner remembers, "I'm from the Midwest, and when I moved out to L.A. in the 1960s, I was an unwelcome guest. If you were an insider, those were great times, but they were impossible for outsiders. To have connected with friends like Harry, Frank and Bill was wonderful. Even all of the other guys at the ASC who had a reputation for being tough, like Leon Shamroy and James Wong Howe, were very nice to me. While working in Canada, I felt that same sense of being welcome."

Discussing the hot topic of "runaway productions," Wagner opines that "this is a purely political issue. It's not the responsibility of producers to protect their local artists. The Canadian government has done a wonderful job of supporting their filmmakers, and it's the responsibility of our government to do the same for us in order to level the playing field. Until then, producers will

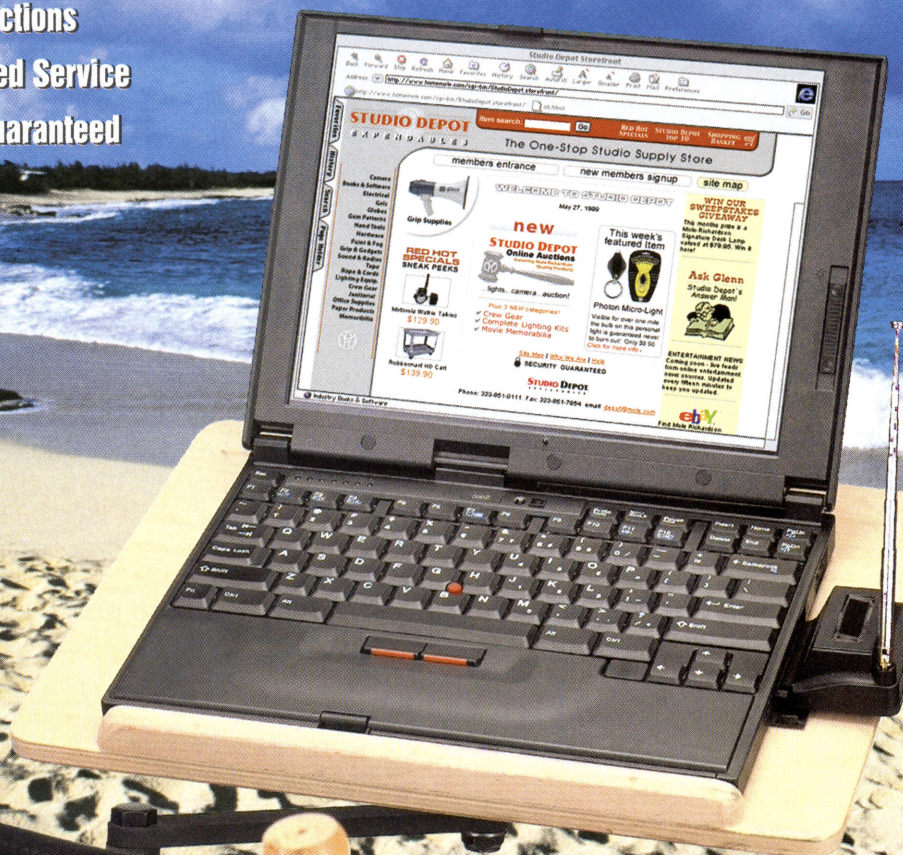
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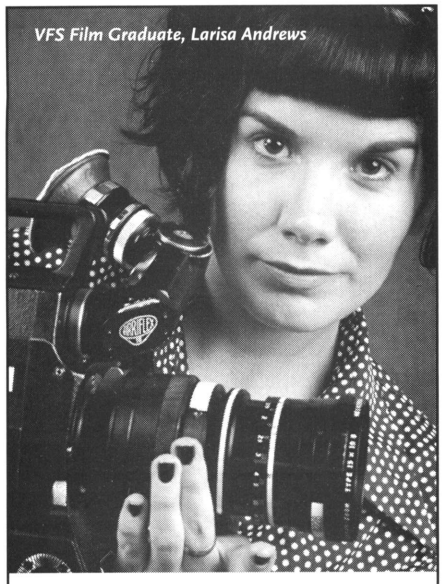


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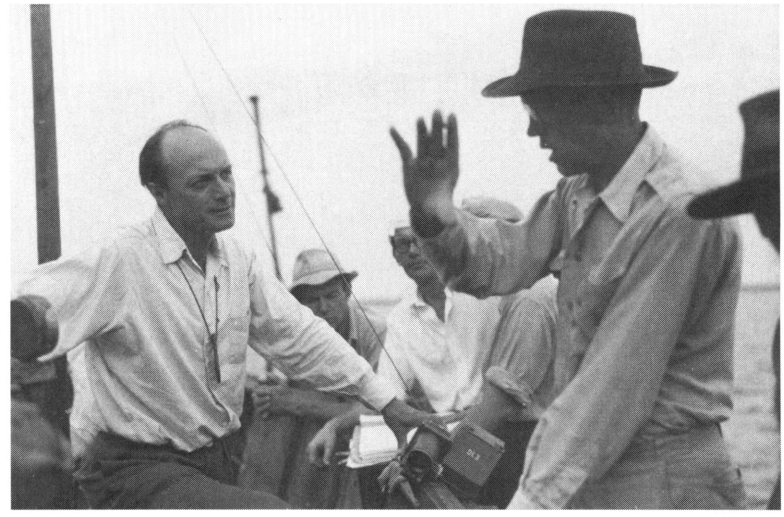
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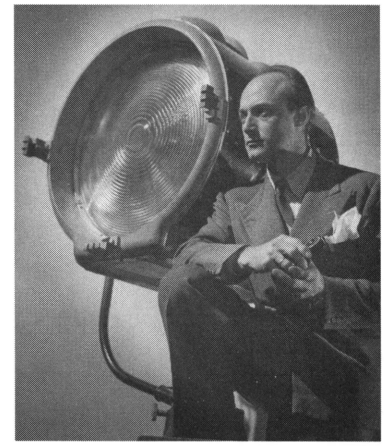
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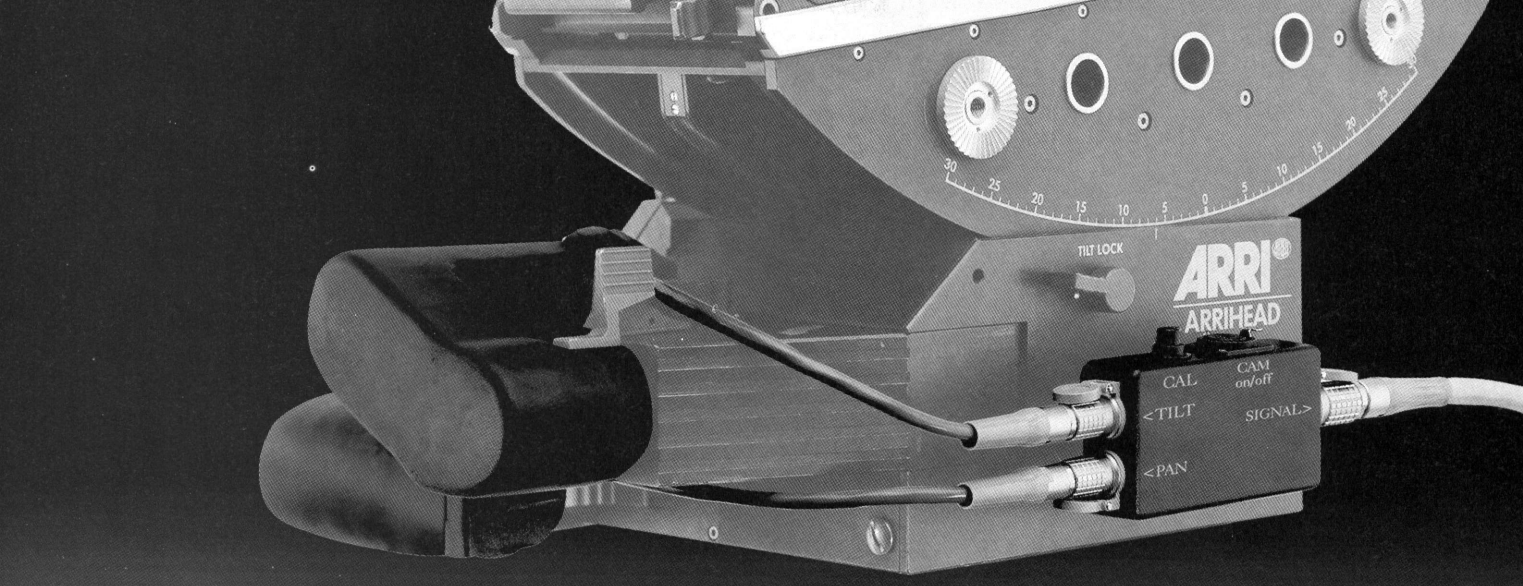
Above: Cardiff and director John Huston on location while filming *The African Queen* (1951). Right: Cardiff is the epitome of dapper English style in this 1946 portrait.

portrait that served to introduce the cinematographer and offer some background on his work. McCall used this as a means to garner further interest — and financing — for the longer film. "It's difficult to find funding for a documentary on someone who isn't well-known to a broad audience," McCall explains. "Even though many people have seen and enjoyed Jack's work, they may not know him by name, or even know what a cinematographer does, so I had to address that issue and educate people in order to go further."

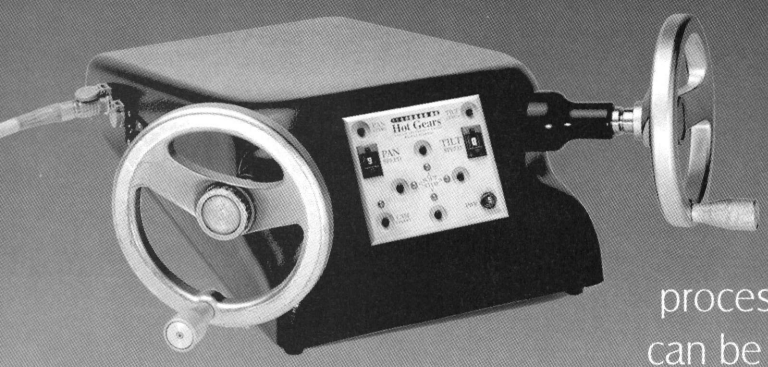
Asked how Cardiff responds to being a subject, McCall explains, "Jack is a bit of a raconteur. He's been interviewed quite a bit, so he has certain stock stories. The trick is to get beyond those by catching him off guard. While we're shooting the formal interviews on 16mm, I've occasionally used a little DV camera when I've felt that he was open to offering something different."

One key aspect of Cardiff's work that is well-examined in *Persistence of Vision* is his artistic impact on color photography. "Jack never served as a director of photography on a black-and-white film," McCall attests. "He operated on a few, but that's it — he arrived artistically with color. He was a Technicolor trainee, and he operated for Ray Rennahan [ASC] on *Wings of the Morning* [1937], which was the first Technicolor film shot in Europe. He later established his reputation as a color specialist on such films as *Scott of the Antarctic, Black Narcissus, The Red Shoes* and *The African Queen."*

The documentary also features personal photographs and 8mm and 16mm footage that Cardiff shot over the years, as well as interviews with many of his admirers and colleagues, including director Richard Fleischer and actor Kirk Douglas *(The Vikings),* cinematographer Freddie Francis, BSC *(Sons and Lovers),* actress Lauren Bacall *(The African Queen),* producer Rafaella De Laurentiis *(Conan the Destroyer),* actress Kim Hunter *(A Matter of Life and Death),* actress Moira Shearer *(The Red Shoes),* editor Thelma Schoonmaker (reflecting on husband Michael Powell's work with Cardiff), and director Martin Scorsese (who discusses the appeal and artistry of Cardiff's work).



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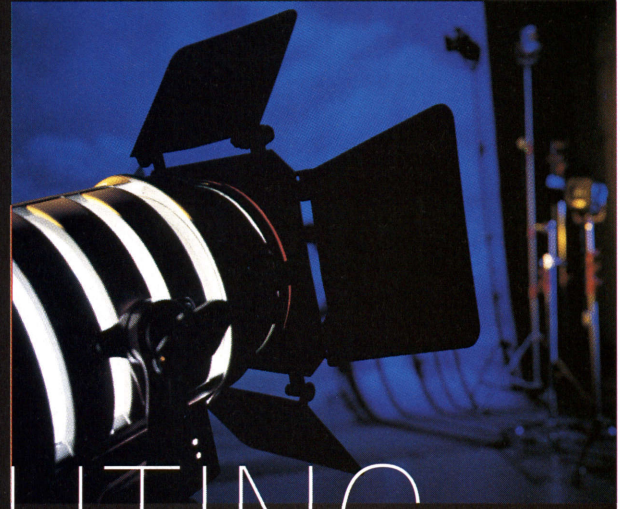


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With the aid of the London-based visual effects company Smoke & Mirrors (who became close collaborators with McCall's company, Modus Operandi), *Persistence of Vision* features several effective re-creations of famous shots seen in Cardiff's films, as well as some in which the cinematographer seemingly enters the colorful worlds he helped create. For example, one shot has him pondering his work on *A Matter of Life and Death* while standing upon the film's famously grandiose stairway to heaven.

One segment of McCall's material has been edited into a self-contained short entitled *The Colour Merchant,* and specifically covers the making of *A Matter of Life and Death.* The short has been included as a supplement to a recent U.K. DVD release of that film, and screened at the Venice Film Festival last month as part a tribute to Cardiff's work on the 1946 classic. "Most supplements and documentaries focus on directors or actors," McCall says, "but given that Jack is 84, he is one of the few surviving voices from that period. He's a link to the history of filmmaking, and that voice needs to be heard.

"I want as many people to hear that voice as possible, so this won't be an esoteric film that will appeal only to some fringe art-house audience. It will be about cinematography, but it won't get bogged down in f-stops and discussions about Brute lights. Instead, I want people to perhaps see a clip from one of Jack's pictures, say 'Oh, I remember that film,' and get locked in to discover this artist and what he accomplished."

AMPAS Salutes the ASC

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences is helping to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the American Society of Cinematographers with an exemplary exhibit of portraiture that's now on public display in the Academy's Grand Lobby Gallery in Beverly Hills. The exhibit opened on August 25 and will run through October 29.

The portraits — evocative impressions of a diverse group of noted cinematographers — were all taken by



14mm, 18mm, 25mm, 32mm, 40mm, 50mm, 75mm, 100mm

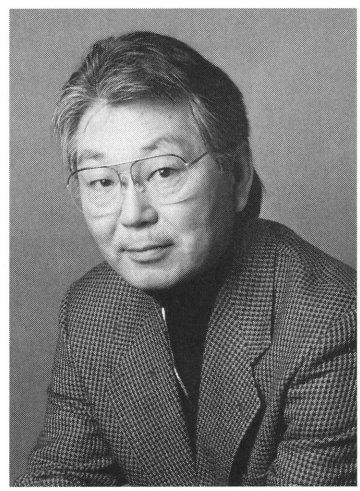
"The script of *I'll Be Home For Christmas* called for most of Act 3 to be staged with thousands of Christmas-tree lights against the black night sky," *says DP Hiro Narita.* "At T3, I couldn't risk flare or ghosts; I used the new Cooke primes"

"A few years ago, we had a night exterior shot of a man sitting by an open fire, both of them in frame," says Hiro Narita. "At the dailies, we saw a ghost of the fire floating above the man's head. It was a wide shot, so the operator hadn't noticed any double kick in the finder."

"I've worked with most of the spherical fixed lenses out there, over the years—high-speed and standard, all makes. Whenever we had a hot shot like that open fire, I remember them all being subject to some flare or ghosting, wide open and one or two stops down—some more than others."

"After reading the *Home For Christmas* script, I set up several tests. We'd need to balance the foreground light levels with the tree lights in the background. And the director wanted a romantic look for those scenes. That meant diffusion, but it didn't mean flare. And one of the interiors would have a fire flickering in the fireplace."

"On a big, darkened stage, we hung up hundreds of those tree lights. Using 5279, I shot right into the lights at T4, T2.8 and wide open, with a set of the new Cookes I'd heard about. I made one test series clean and other tests with Promist (various densities) at those three apertures."



Director of Photography
Hiro Narita ASC

"I didn't expect to shoot those scenes in the picture wide open, but I wanted to see what was possible. We were after a romantic softness overall, not just in the highlights. Ideally, we needed lenses that didn't flare at all from the tree lights, so that we could then soften *everything* with the Promist. Wide open was obviously the toughest test, with or without diffusion."

"The test footage showed that we'd get the balance we needed at T3 and that the one-eighth Promist was the one to use. Wide open and without diffusion, there was no noticeable veiling glare, even shooting *directly* into the test lights. By T4, there was none."

"Later, shooting the actual scenes at T3 with diffusion, we were able to soften the foreground, with just a slight romantic glow from each individual Christmas light. There were literally thousands of them, up against the black night sky; and the sky stayed black."

"Night exteriors at wide stops—I've always had to think about the danger of flare, in scenes like that. And on this job, we *had* to use diffusion and the lights *had* to be in frame. But there was no flare; and there was no double kick from the fire in the fireplace."

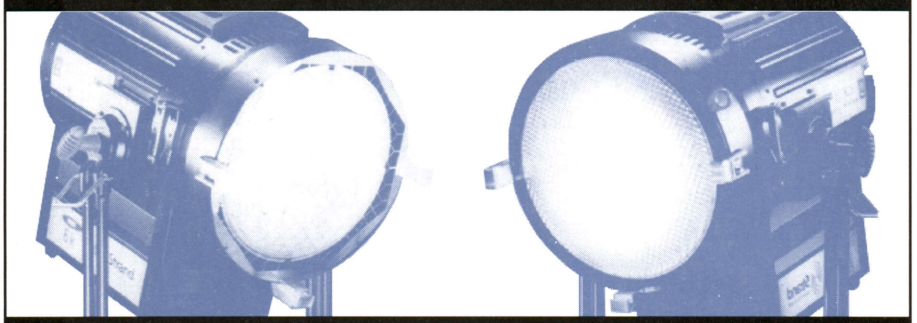
Hiro Narita ASC has been a Director Of Photography since 1971. The National Society of Film Critics gave his feature NEVER CRY WOLF their Best Cinematography Award. His FAREWELL TO MANZANAR won a Best Cinematography Emmy Nomination. And his short film VISAS & VIRTUES won an Academy Award in 1997.

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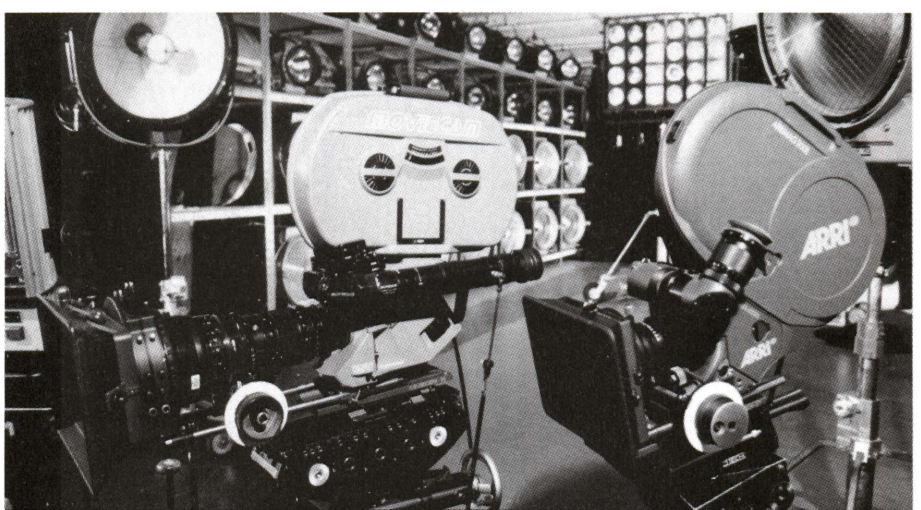
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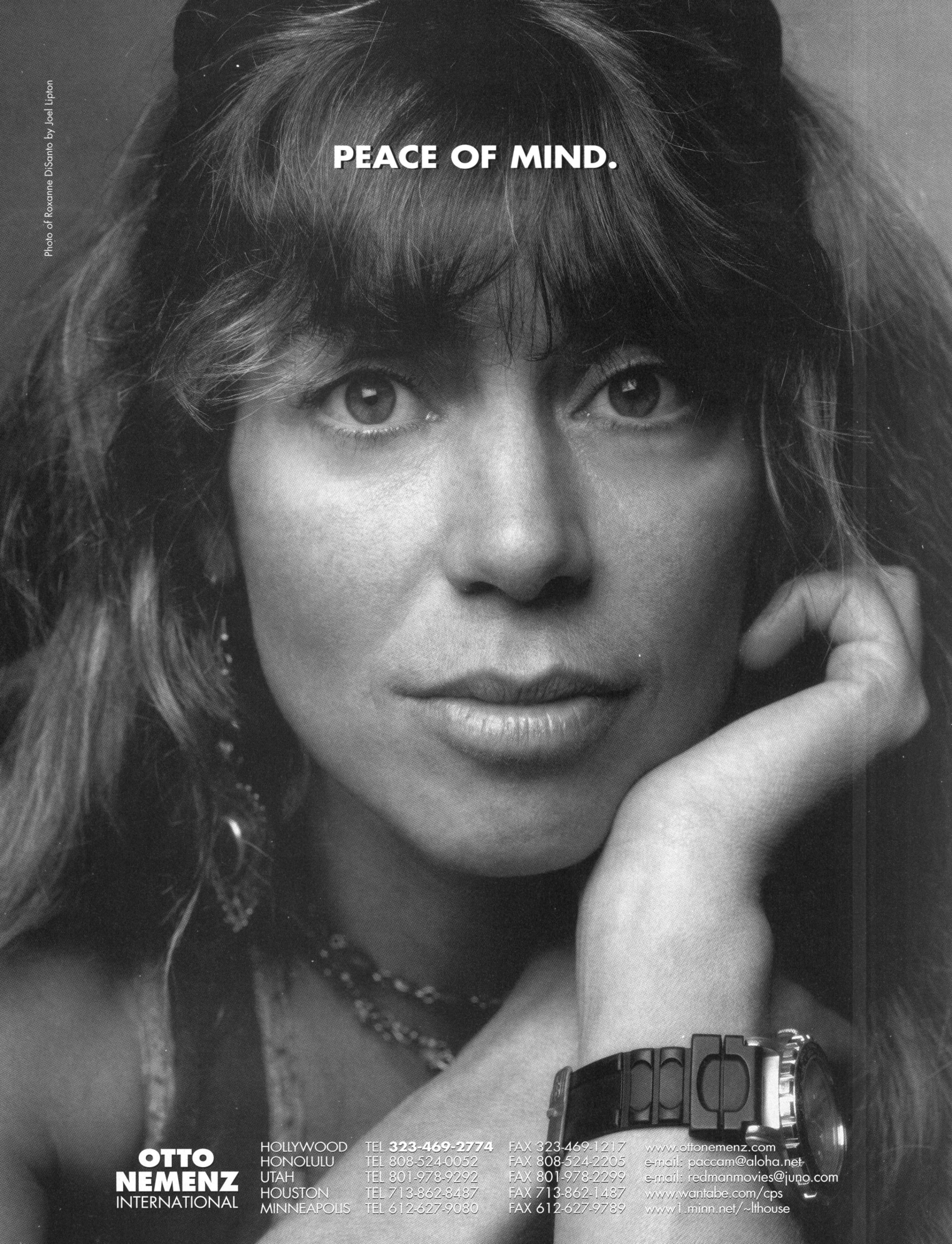
Photo by Douglas Kirkland.

Gordon Willis, ASC is one of the many cinematographers who appear in Douglas Kirkland's exhibit at AMPAS.

Douglas Kirkland, the former *Look* and *Life* photojournalist who has since established himself as a modern master of glamour photography, as well one who appreciates of the fine art of cinematography.

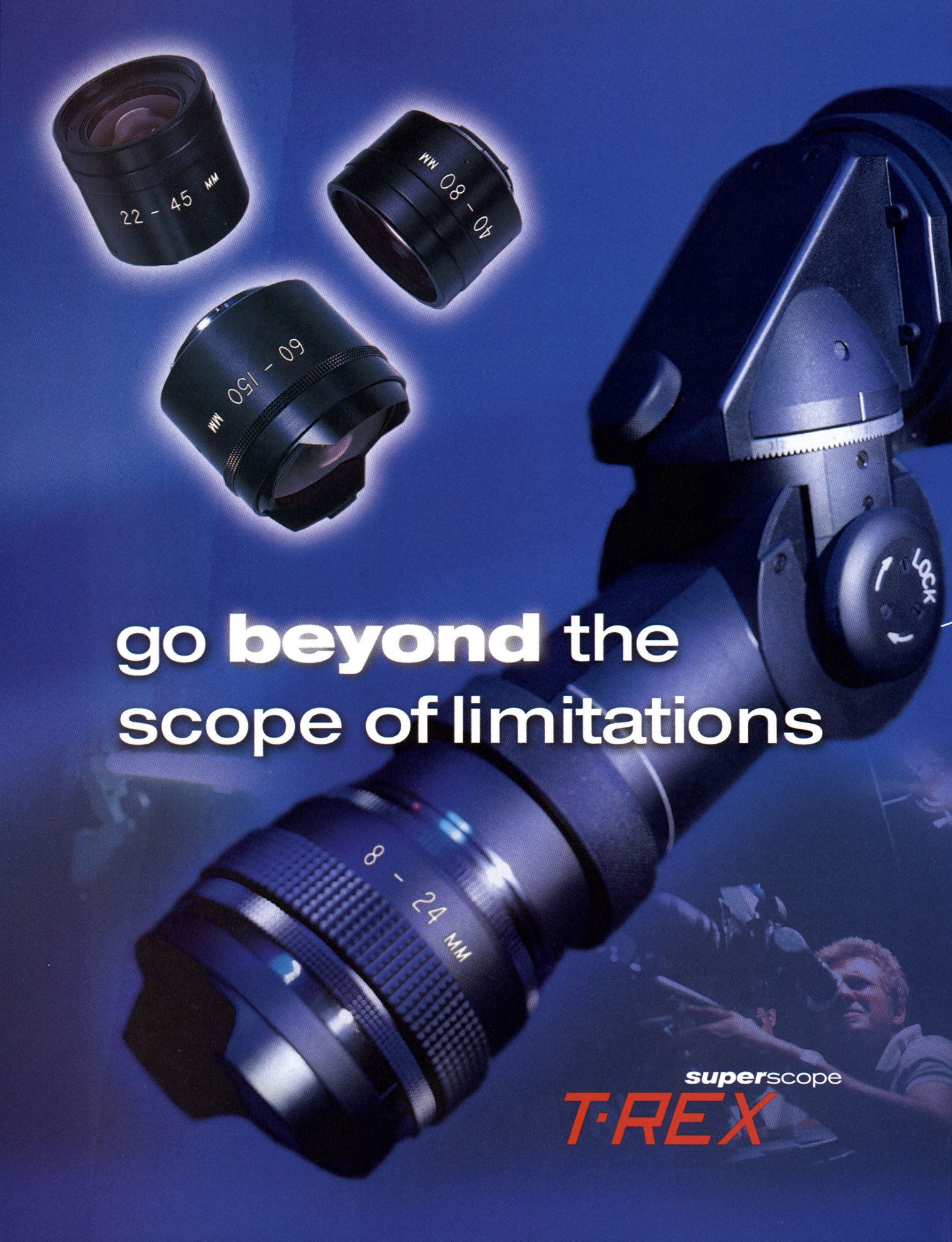
Each black-and-white portrait is accompanied by a brief statement by the subject about his or her feelings about filmmaking. Photos on display include shots of ASC members Dean Cundey, Gordon Willis, Don Peterman, Gu Changwei, Don Burgess, Russell Carpenter, Jack Green, Adam Greenberg, Conrad Hall, John Hora, Judy Irola, Janusz Kaminski, George Koblasa, Laszlo Kovacs, Ellen Kuras, Donald M. Morgan, Woody Omens, Steven Poster, Robert Richardson, Giuseppe Rotunno, Nancy Schrieber, John Schwartzman, Dean Semler, Dante Spinotti, William Wages, John Toll and Vilmos Zsigmond.

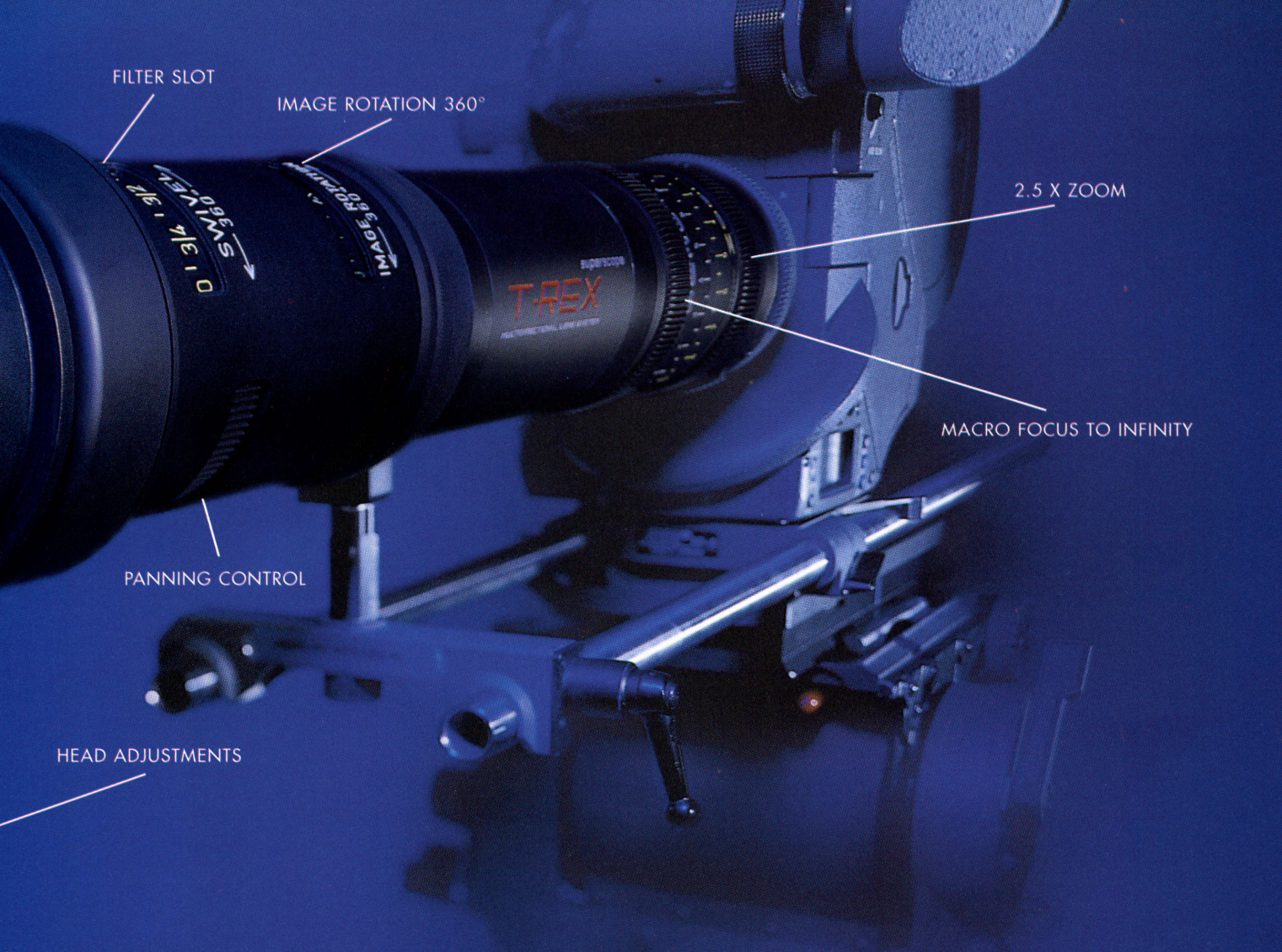
The Academy will end the two-month exhibit with a special seminar held in their Samuel Goldwyn Theater on October 22, which will also be dedicated to the 80th anniversary of ASC. The event will open with the screening of clips from 20 motion pictures nominated for Best Cinematography Oscars. The screening will be followed by a panel discussion tentatively entitled "ASC at 80: The Evolution of an Art Form." Pending availability, panelists will include ASC president Victor Kemper and Society fellows John Bailey, William Fraker and Vilmos Zsigmond. ■



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A Sword in the Bed

Cinematographer Larry Smith helps Stanley Kubrick craft a unique look for *Eyes Wide Shut*, a dreamlike coda to the director's brilliant career.

by Stephen Pizzello Unit photography by Manuel Harlan

In Viennese author Arthur Schnitzler's *Traumnovelle* (*Dream Story*), a seemingly happy marriage is nearly torn asunder when a prominent physician learns that his faithful wife has strayed in her imagination. Stunned by his spouse's confession, the good doctor suffers Freudian feelings of emasculation that send him spiraling off on a compulsive quest for sexual validation and revenge. He wanders the nighttime streets, determined to regain his pride, and soon meets a succession of temptresses who steer him toward a reunion with an old college classmate — a failed medical student who earns his living playing the piano. When the musician reveals that he occasionally plies his trade at masked orgies staged by wealthy and prominent citizens, the doctor insists on infiltrating that very evening's event, consequences be damned. Once he gains entrance, however, a sinister twist of fate threatens to

Photos courtesy of Warner Bros.

derail both his marriage and his sense of security.

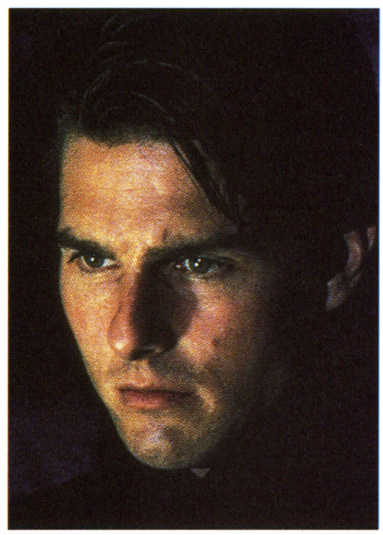
Schnitzler's novella, penned in 1926, fascinated legendary director Stanley Kubrick for several decades. The filmmaker finally took his first serious step toward adapting the material in 1994, when he began collaborating with noted screenwriter Frederic Raphael, who had earned an Academy Award for *Darling* (1965) and a nomination for *Two for the Road* (1967). Convinced that male-female relationships hadn't changed a great deal since Schnitzler's era, Kubrick told Raphael that he wanted to update the writer's tale, which was set in 19th-century Vienna, to present-day New York.

The duo hewed closely to their source material, fashioning a dreamlike tale of sexual obsession that became a star vehicle for married actors Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, who were recruited to play Dr. William Harford and his art-curator wife, Alice. Production of the film began in November of 1996, and proceeded at a pace that could only be described as unusually deliberate, even by Kubrick's standards. The film was finally completed in March of 1998 and released this past July, just four months after the filmmaker's death.

Renowned for his exacting standards and perfectionist tendencies, Kubrick labored over every detail of the film — right down to the set dressings, which included paintings by his longtime spouse, Christiane. Famously unwilling to travel far from his home base in Hertfordshire, England, the filmmaker had elaborate Manhattan street sets constructed at Pinewood Studios. He also selected various other locations, including an estate in Norfolk that would serve as the site of the orgy, which ostensibly occurs on Long Island.

On one of these scouting trips, Kubrick brought along cinematographer Larry Smith, who had served as





Opposite: Dr. Harford (Tom Cruise) nuzzles his wife, Alice (Nicole Kidman), not realizing that he is about to discover her secret desires. In addition to establishing the story's central conflict, this scene introduces the blend of warm tones and rich blues that dominate the couple's apartment throughout the film. This page, top: An inebriated Alice is wooed by a persistent Hungarian playboy (Sky Dumont) at the elegant holiday party thrown by multimillionaire Victor Ziegler. The sequence was lit almost entirely with practical fixtures, including an enormous curtain of Christmas lights. Center: Harford broods over his spouse's carnal confession.

a gaffer on both *Barry Lyndon* and *The Shining*. The duo drove out to an estate that was being considered for the orgy sequence, and as they examined it from a distance, the director asked Smith how he would light the imposing edifice for a night exterior scene. After Smith detailed his strategy, the pair headed back to Kubrick's home. "When we arrived at the house, he said to me, 'Well, do you want to shoot the movie?'" Smith recalls. "It was as simple as that. This may sound strange, but I didn't say yes right away; I actually asked him if I could sleep on it! Because I'd worked with Stanley before, I knew what kind of commitment he demanded. I knew it would be a long schedule and that I'd have to be wrapped up in the project body and soul. Of course, deep down I knew right away that I was going to do it, and I told him so the next day. Obviously, most cameramen would give their right arm to work with Stanley, but ultimately, the reason I said yes was because we'd been friends for more than 20 years, and he asked me personally if I wanted the job. That meant a lot to me."

Smith's association with Kubrick began in the early 1970s, when he was asked to serve as chief electrician on *Barry Lyndon*. Smith had carved out a career in exhibition lighting, but he had repeatedly found himself drawn to feature filmmaking, and he jumped at the chance. "At the time, I didn't really know too much about Stanley," he admits. "I knew he was an American movie director whose films had been very well-received. As soon as I began working on the show, though, I realized that Stanley was not an ordinary person; he had tremendous vision, as well as a unique and very charismatic presence. His personality was quite understated, but when people were around him, they didn't know quite how to comport themselves. They definitely became intimidated, even though he never resorted to tactics like shouting, screaming or foot-stamping. Rather, their uneasiness stemmed from the fact that he was a

A Sword in the Bed



Above: Alice readies herself for Ziegler's Christmas party in the film's sensuous opening shot, which establishes a mood of erotic longing. Below, right: Cruise, Kubrick and Smith (far right) converse with a rather animated and attractive "corpse" (Julienne Davis).

very smart man who asked intelligent and searching questions. Interacting with Stanley was a bit like playing tennis with a professional; if you were quick enough, you could hit the ball back to him, but if you weren't, you wouldn't last long."

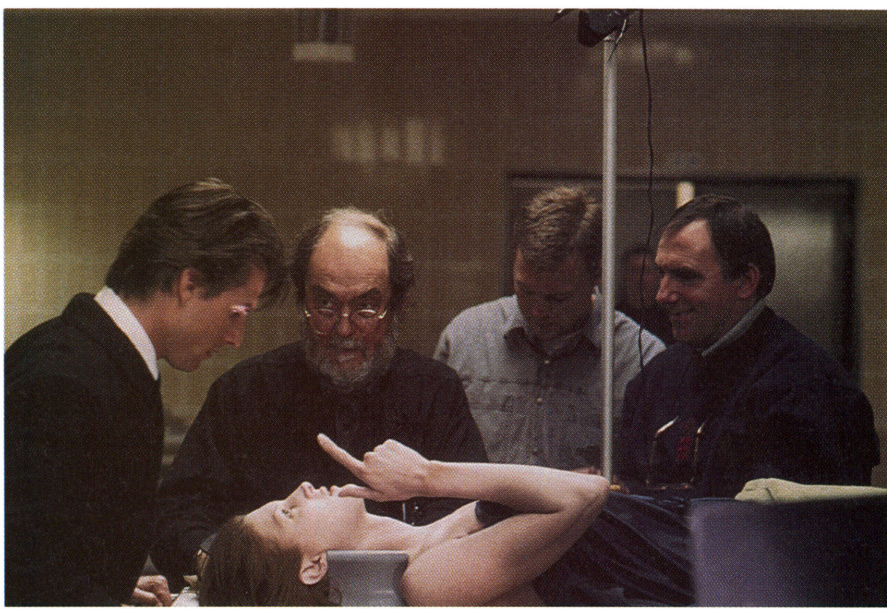
Smith himself managed to return Kubrick's serve during a day of interior shooting on *Barry Lyndon*. The production was set up in one of the film's stately manors, but it was raining heavily outside, where the crew had set up an array of Mini-Brutes on towers to illuminate the scene through the building's windows, which were covered with tracing paper. "Things were going a bit slowly, and I was discussing the situation with the director of photography, John Alcott [BSC]," he remembers. "All of the lighting gear was mounted on metal platforms, and the crew was proceeding with caution. Up to that point, I hadn't had any personal interaction with Stanley, but he ambled over and said to me, 'It's raining out there, isn't it?' I told him it was, and he asked, 'Is it dangerous?' I answered, 'Well, that's what they're saying.' He replied, 'You're communicating with the crew, so they've obviously got radios, right? Aren't the radios getting wet?' I told him, 'No, they aren't, because we wrapped them in polythene bags.'

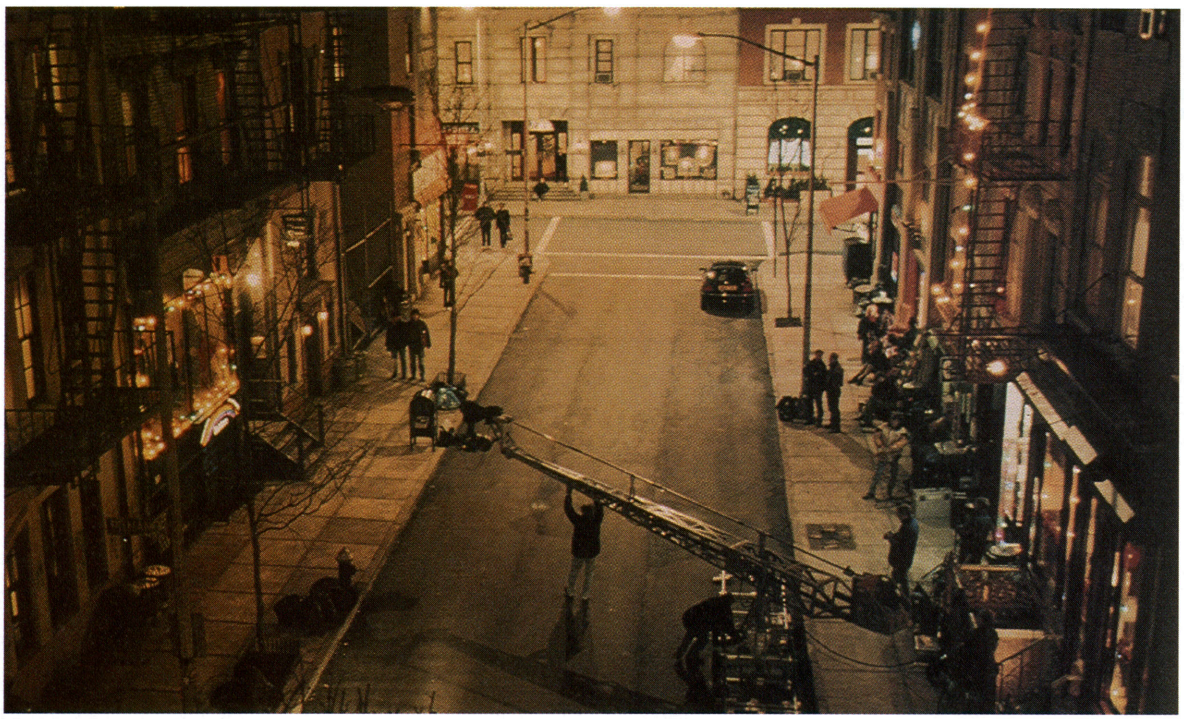
"Well, that's just what Stanley wanted to hear, and from that moment on, we got along famously," he says with a laugh. "I had a very happy friendship with him right up until he died."

Asked to outline Kubrick's methodology on the set, Smith compares the director to a field general in the military, noting that "any general worth his salt knows that he has to have very good officers down through the ranks. Stanley wanted everybody on his projects to really know what they were doing; he needed to have complete confidence in the people around him. When you're working on a film as big as *Barry Lyndon*, with the vastness of the locations and the splendor of it all, you quickly realize that none of it happens by accident — everything has to be very carefully thought-out and choreographed. Stanley had a lifelong fascination with Napoleon Bonaparte, and if he hadn't been a committed pacifist, I think he would have made a great military strategist, because he was very organized and good with logistics."

Smith confirms that Kubrick was "totally absorbed" by his craft. "When he was working on something, he focused on it completely — he couldn't think about anything else. He did a tremendous amount of research, which is probably why he didn't make as many movies as some other filmmakers. In fact, he did quite a bit of the research himself — obviously, he would also get other people to gather certain bits of information for him, but if you gave him a slab of material, he'd go through it and ask a barrage of relevant questions. He consumed a lot of books and journals, including *American Cinematographer*, which he read religiously — he was always waving the magazine under my nose to see if I'd read this or that article. If there was a new tool out there, he knew all about it, even though he didn't necessarily have hands-on experience with it. For that reason, he had no preconceptions about what a piece of equipment could do. He'd simply say, 'Well, let's get it and try this or that with it.'

"During all of this research and testing, Stanley would gradually get an overall picture of what he wanted to do, how he wanted to do it, and where he wanted to do it. He had a great deal of foresight, and he didn't restrict himself to a particular mode of working. He created a new style





An overhead view of the elaborate Manhattan street sets constructed at Pinewood Studios by the picture's production design team, led by Les Tomkins and Roy Walker. Four blocks of facades were dressed with authentic items shipped in from New York City.

every time he did a movie, and along the way, he invariably came up with some incredible ideas."

When filming was imminent, Smith says, Kubrick would obsess over every visual element that would appear in a given frame, from props and furniture to the color of walls and other objects. "Stanley would tell the production designers and set dressers exactly what types of lamps, chairs or decor he wanted, and he always preferred using the best materials — he wouldn't use paper and wood if it was possible to do it with plaster, cement or brick. If we didn't like the color of the walls or something else in the scene, he'd have them changed.

"Once the sets were built, I'd go in and light them. I'd get the electricians in there, set up all of the practical lights, and then wire them to dimmers to give us the control we needed. After everything was in place, I'd shoot various tests with different exposures. When we looked at the test footage, Stanley would say things like, 'I like that, I don't like that,' 'Why don't we try this?' or 'Why don't we go and shoot some more tests?' A typical comment might be, 'I don't like the look of that lampshade, let's change the color.' The process involved a constant series of adjustments, which is one of the reasons that our schedule was so long. In many ways, it's a much more expensive and time-consuming way to shoot than simply using lights to achieve a certain color scheme, but that's the way Stanley worked on all of his movies. He was never afraid to go back to a certain set or location and change things around. He wouldn't show even a single frame of film that he wasn't happy with himself. When the paying public goes to see a Stanley Kubrick film, they're not going to get something that's simply thrown together."

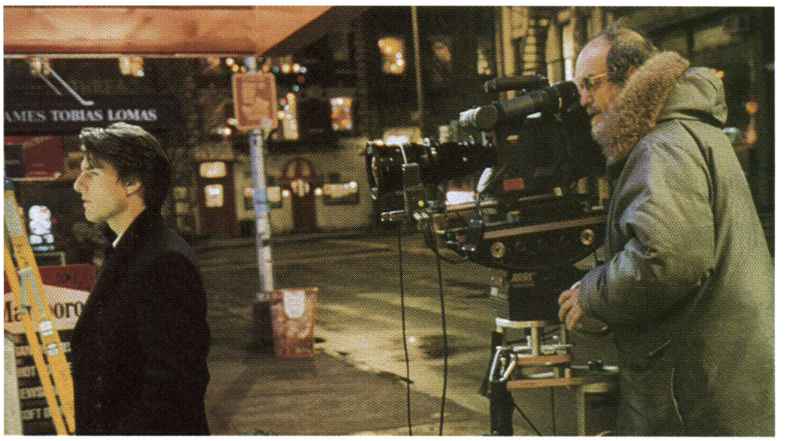
Smith and his crew would typically have a set completely ready the night before a given scene was scheduled to be shot. The next day, Kubrick would rehearse the actors for as long as he felt was necessary before rolling the camera. The cinematographer notes that Kubrick's reputation for multiple takes, while accurate, was often misconstrued as perfectionism taken to eccentric extremes. "Stanley's views about actors are quite well-documented," Smith points out. "With certain actors on his previous pictures, I think he probably felt that he needed 70 takes to get them to do the scene properly! It wasn't like that with Tom and Nicole, however. We did occasionally do lots of takes, but it was more often due to a logistical problem than acting issues. Stanley didn't do take after take because he enjoyed it or wanted to drive everyone crazy — the scene was either right or it wasn't right, and whatever kept it from being right had to be eliminated. It might be something very subtle, like an ashtray facing the wrong way, but Stanley had a phenomenal eye for small details."

On *Eyes Wide Shut,* Kubrick was inspired to work with existing light fixtures and a minimum of "movie lights" — a strategy he had previously pursued to stunning effect on both *The Shining* (see *AC* August 1980) and *Barry Lyndon* (which earned John Alcott the Oscar for Best Cinematography; see *AC* March 1976). While shooting the latter picture, Kubrick used a pair of

A Sword in the Bed







Above: After finishing his last set at the Sonata Cafe, piano player Nick Nightingale (Todd Field) tells his old medical-school classmate a seductive secret about upper-class orgies. Smith lit the scene entirely with colored Christmas lights and 60-watt globes placed on the cafe's tables. The globes were controlled with dimmers and softened for close-ups with graduated ND filters. Upper right: In a shot that illustrates the effect of two-stop force-developing, Harford begins to realize that his sense of adventure may cost him his safety. Lower right: Kubrick frames Cruise with one of his trusty Arriflex cameras.

special super-fast f0.7 Zeiss lenses (36.5mm and 50mm) to film candle-light scenes with virtually no supplemental lighting. The custom-made instruments were actually still camera lenses developed for use by NASA in the Apollo moon-landing program, later modified for Kubrick by Ed DiGiulio of Cinema Products Corporation in Los Angeles.

Smith reports that Kubrick actually asked DiGiulio to recalibrate the *Barry Lyndon* lenses for use on *Eyes Wide Shut,* but eventually scrapped that plan. "Stanley wanted to shoot with available light and real sources wherever possible," Smith relates. "We discussed the idea of using the f0.7 lenses from *Barry Lyndon,* but they just weren't right for the type of shooting we were doing. Stanley wanted to be able to show some of the sets, such as the ballroom in the opening party sequence, in 360 degrees, via extensive Steadicam work and wide-angle lenses. He wanted to give the actors the flexibility to move wherever they needed to, and he also wanted to swing the camera around the room without worrying about where the lights were. Furthermore, *Barry Lyndon* was made more than 25 years ago, when film stocks were rated at 100 ASA. Now we have the luxury of 500- and 800-speed stocks, which eliminates the need for specialized lenses like those old f0.7 Zeisses."

Kubrick framed *Eyes Wide Shut* in the standard 1.85:1 format, primarily using a set of Zeiss Superspeed T1.3 spherical prime lenses, but occasionally opting to employ Arri's T2.1 variable prime lenses or a zoom. Smith notes that the auteur favored wider lenses to show off the production values in his sets; most of *Eyes* was shot with the Zeiss 18mm lens, and the filmmakers rarely went longer than 35mm. A longtime fan of Arriflex cameras, Kubrick deployed a pair of 535Bs, operated by Martin Hume, throughout the production. The filmmakers also made frequent use of a Steadicam rig equipped with a Moviecam SL, operated by either Elizabeth Ziegler or Peter Cavaciuti.

In order to facilitate Kubrick's shooting strategy, which required the picture's film stock to be force-developed by two stops at Deluxe Laboratories in London, Smith conducted extensive photographic tests at the prep stage. "Kodak's Vision 500T stock had just come out, but I was planning to use their old EXR 5298, another 500-ASA stock. During my tests, I discovered that while you can't really force-develop the Vision 500T, the old 5298 could handle it quite well, even if you were forcing it two stops. Kodak designs their stocks to be shot in the middle of the sensitometric curve, rather than at the extreme ends, and when I tried to force the Vision 500T, I found that it had a blue bias. Obviously, that's a characteristic of that particular film stock, so we opted to use the 5298 instead. That gave us a bit of a problem, of course, because 98 had been phased out, but Kodak assured us that they could provide as many rolls of it as we needed.

"During our tests, we decided that we liked what we were seeing, although we were always debating various issues, such as 'What will

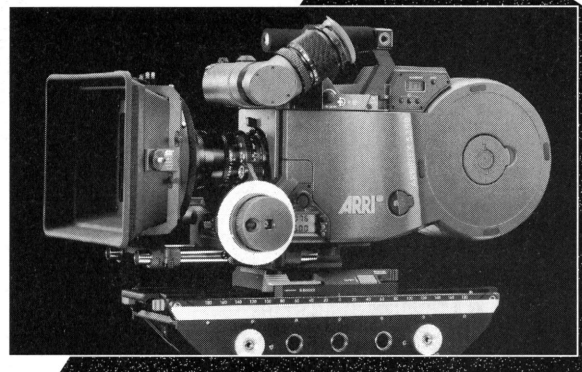
force-developing do to the skin tones?' or 'How will it affect the practicals?' There's no question that with force-developing you get exaggerated highlights — they really blow out. We decided that if we pushed everything two stops, it would really have the effect of an extra stop and a quarter or a stop and a half. That's basically the way we worked it out, and we eventually decided to force-develop everything, even the day exteriors, to keep the look consistent."

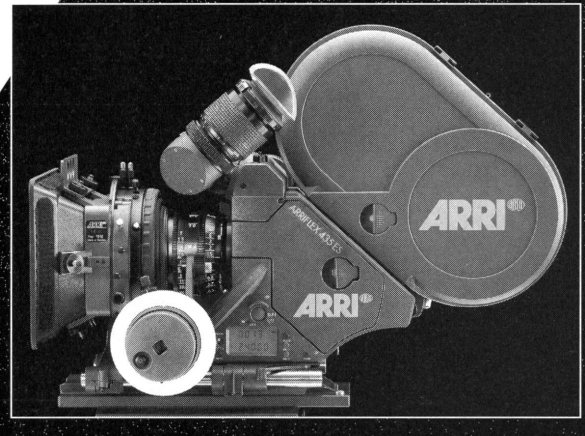
Smith credits Deluxe with making this strategy viable. "I'd forced footage before for the odd shot, but never for an entire movie," he says. "I quickly came to realize that it's not an exact science; you do get some variations, because it's very difficult to keep things within certain parameters when you're force-developing every frame on a project of this magnitude. Having said that, I think Deluxe did an incredibly consistent job day in and day out. They put aside a bath just for us, and they always put our stuff through first — that was a special privilege they extended to Stanley. It was a seven-day-a-week job to make sure that what we were getting was consistent, and I give all the credit to the guys who handled that. Ian Robinson was our main contact at Deluxe U.K., but the guy who supervised everything was their director of operations, Chester Eyre."

Eyre, who first worked with Kubrick as a timer on *A Clockwork Orange*, began collaborating more closely with the director on *Full Metal Jacket*. He notes that Kubrick never limited himself to standard lab practices, particularly in the case of *Eyes Wide Shut*. "Stanley had his own ideas about what each picture should look like, and what he was trying to achieve with it. Before he began shooting *Full Metal Jacket*, we talked about the look quite extensively. He detailed the lighting style he was planning to use, and we did lots of tests. On *Eyes Wide Shut*, he told me

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A Sword in the Bed



Right: Kubrick peers through his viewfinder while blocking a scene set in the Rainbow Costume Shop, where Harford begins to sense a deception involving the proprietor (Rade Serbedzija) and his sexually precocious daughter (Leelee Sobieski). Below: The apprehensive doctor is unmasked at the orgy.

he was going to rate the negative stock faster than the actual recommended speed, and that he wanted us to force-develop it two stops to bring it back to its original exposure level. That created several advantages for him: he could work with less light and obtain a particular mood. Force-developing in that way is very unusual, and it's normally done as a last resort if the filmmakers are losing their light and are desperate to get a shot. On this picture, though, it was a deliberate strategy that was designed to get a special look; we basically left the negative in the developing bath for a longer amount of time than usual.

"Lab people always worry when things are done in a non-standard manner, and at first we were all surprised that he wanted to do it. However, once we began seeing the results and the quality of the negative, we understood what he was trying to do. If you look at the night scenes in particular, they have terrific exposure and depth, as well as very good blacks."

The results of the two-stop force-development are clearly evident in the film's first major setpiece, an elaborate Christmas party staged at the spectacularly lavish home of Dr. Harford's top patient, multimillionaire Victor Ziegler (Sydney Pollack). During the course of the evening, both Bill and Alice are propositioned by predatory members of the opposite sex: as the physician is waylaid by a pair of seductive models (Louise Taylor and Stewart Thorndike), a tipsy Alice takes a spin on the dance floor with an unctuous Hungarian playboy (Sky Dumont). The scene was lit almost entirely with a huge wall of ordinary Christmas lights to create an elegant holiday ambience. "Two months before the movie went into production, we began testing for the party sequence," Smith recalls. "We tried out a variety of different Christmas lights before I found the ones I wanted in a catalogue. They were very low-wattage, but had a really magical quality. The effect is obviously enhanced by the force-developing, which made the lights appear to be much brighter than they were, but even to the naked eye, the visual impact of that setup was sensational.

"We decided to shoot nearly all of the picture at a stop of T1.3, and since we were pushing everything, we were able to create a wonderful warm glow. We also used a Tiffen LC-1 [low-contrast] filter for our night interior scenes, and the effect it produced is especially evident in the party sequence — it made the lights glow and gave everything a slightly surreal edge."

Although the filmmakers used no additional lighting in wider shots of the party, Smith did modify his approach for close-ups of the actors, utilizing a China ball containing a dimmer-controlled 200-watt bulb. "The China balls were very useful if there was any movement in the scene, because they're very light; we could just walk around with them and do anything we wanted. Normally, I only used a small amount of fill light when things began to get a bit murky, because I knew that the force-developing would give us the exposure level we needed. For the scene in which the Hungarian first approaches Alice, I created some fill with a smaller curtain of the Christmas lights."

Smith found himself striving for a different type of nocturnal ambience when the production moved onto the highly detailed Manhattan street sets at Pinewood, which were built by a production design crew headed by Les Tomkins and Roy Walker. Four blocks' worth



IN MEMORY

OF

STANLEY KUBRICK,

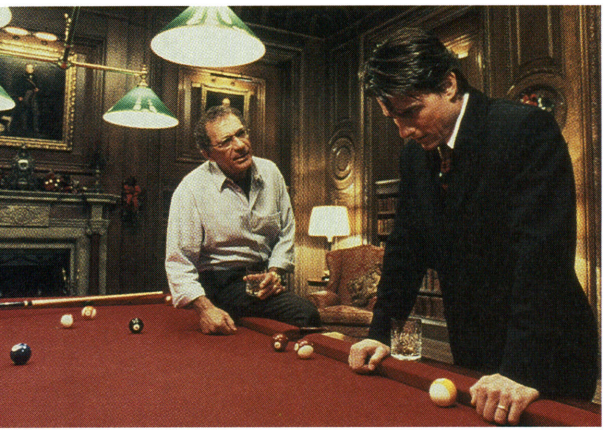
A GREAT ARTIST

AND

A GOOD FRIEND.



A Sword in the Bed



Above: An exasperated Ziegler (Sydney Pollack) lectures Bill: "Life goes on. It always does until it doesn't. But you know that, don't you?" The pool-room set was lit with a combination of 200-watt practicals and China balls hung from the ceiling. Below, right: Bill and Alice approach a reconciliation, amid an appropriately melancholy ambience.

of facades were built and then dressed with street signs and other authentic items that were shipped in from New York City itself. The facades were periodically redressed, depending upon the scene at hand. "Once again, we used available light," he details. "We put New York-type lampposts right in the frame, and they were all on dimmers. They were ordinary lampposts that we converted; we took out the normal bulbs and replaced them with our own 2K single-ended bulbs. To add a bit of light to the scenes, I'd usually turn up the levels on some of the lampposts that were out of shot. We also placed a few 300- or 500-watt quartz bulbs on the buildings, as well as a few other lights that we aimed downward to create pools of light. The rest of the illumination for those scenes was provided by Christmas fixtures and the lights we placed in the various shops and storefronts.

"We did shoot some of the street stuff on real London streets, and for those scenes I occasionally created an overall nighttime ambience with a big blue 18K fixture mounted on a cherrypicker. We didn't do that so much on our New York street sets, though, because the practical lights were usually enough to create a good atmosphere."

Smith notes that the filmmakers applied a classic trick in a rather unusual manner for a few medium shots of Harford walking restlessly along Manhattan streets. "In some of the scenes, the backgrounds were rear-projection plates," the cinematographer reveals. "Generally, when Tom's facing the camera, the backgrounds are rear-projected; anything that shows him from a side view was done on the streets of London. We had the plates shot in New York by a second unit [that included cinematographers Patrick Turley, Malik Sayeed and Arthur Jafa]. Once the plates were sent to us, we had them force-developed and balanced to the necessary levels. We'd then go onto our street sets and shoot Tom walking on a treadmill. After setting the treadmill to a certain speed, we'd put some lighting effects on him to simulate the glow from the various storefronts that were passing by in the plates. We spent a few weeks on those shots."

Eight more weeks were required to capture the film's visual centerpiece: a baroque, ritualistic orgy staged in an elegant mansion by powerful members of society's upper crust. Concealed beneath a mask and dark cloak, Dr. Harford watches in astonishment as an imposing red-robed figure consecrates a circle of nearly nude women, who then select partners from the crowd of costumed onlookers. The physician soon finds himself touring the mansion's many rooms, where the masked revelers engage in a salacious display of sexual abandon.

The sequence was shot in Norfolk, England, at an estate that featured an array of Indian architectural flourishes, including a very high, domed ceiling. "In order to light the mansion's main room, we installed a big truss rig up in the dome," Smith explains. "Mounted in the truss was a Martin PAL 1200 unit, which we rented from a rock 'n' roll lighting company in London; it has a 1.2K HMI lamp inside that bounces off an adjustable mirror, and you can put different kinds of gobos in it. The truss also held a couple of Martin MAC 500s, which are from the same family of lighting instruments; we used those to light the people standing just beyond the ceremonial circle. To provide some overall fill, we set up some space lights as well. That was our basic setup in the main room, although I did use a couple of small spots for close-ups of the man in the red cloak.

"The shots where Tom's character begins gliding from room to room were done with the Steadicam," Smith adds. "Once again, we used practical lights for those scenes. I also had some wooden plinths made, and we used those to hide some lights that raked up the columns in the rooms, so you'd never see a direct



light. There were a few ceiling lights here or there, and a couple of wall lights, but that was it."

In U.S. prints of the film, digital figures were added — at the behest of the Motion Picture Association of America — to obscure the most explicit action in the orgy sequence. Asked for his opinion on this controversial edict, Smith says simply, "Naturally, I'd have preferred if [the MPAA] hadn't required that, but Stanley had to comply in order to get an R rating. In Europe, the digital figures won't be there. Personally, I don't think it's that big a deal, but European viewers will certainly see much more going on in those scenes!"

A key aspect of the film's visual design is its meticulous color structure; throughout *Eyes Wide Shut,* Kubrick uses a veritable rainbow of bold colors to underscore the emotional subtexts of various scenes. These hues cover the entire range of the spectrum — the seductive lavender of a prostitute's dress and bedsheets; the warm oranges and deep blues that dominate the Harfords' apartment; the glaring, blank whites of the physician's office; and a crimson red that signals danger throughout the picture, particularly in the orgy interrogator's flowing robes and the felt surface of Victor Ziegler's pool table. The film's script even seems to make sly reference to this strategy on several occasions: when the two leggy models approach Harford at Ziegler's Christmas party, they offer to take him on a sexual excursion to "the end of the rainbow," and when the doctor seeks to obtain a mask and cloak for the orgy, he eventually rents them from the Rainbow Costume Shop.

Deluxe U.K.'s Chester Eyre submits that the director "had his own ideas about what each picture should look like, and what he was trying to achieve with it. He had a fixed idea about the color of each

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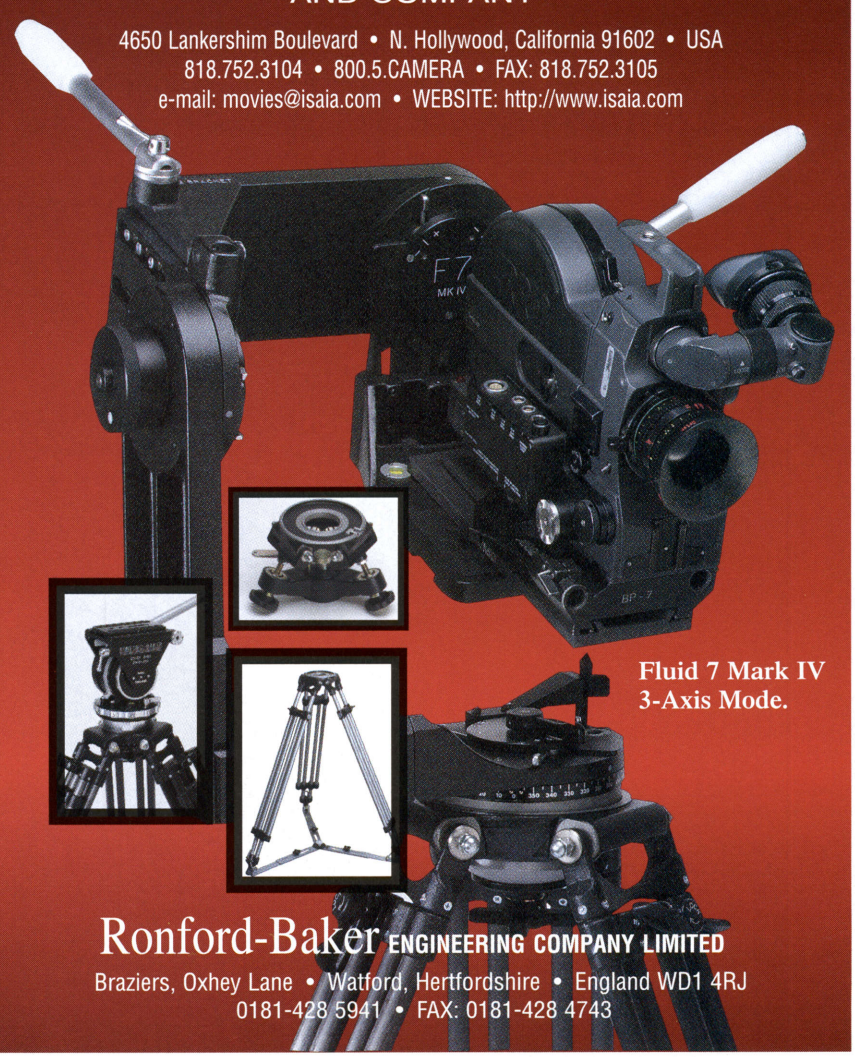
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sequence, and he would strive with you to obtain that color, even if it had no relation to the preceding sequence. He was always focused on the mood that could be achieved with a certain color. In the case of *Eyes Wide Shut,* Stanley actually supplied us with information about the red, green and blue [timing] lights. He would look at what had been shot the previous day, mentally adjust the colors, write the specifications on the camera sheets he gave to us, and then request certain color combinations that he'd devised with Larry Smith on the set. Normally, it's left to the laboratory to assess the color of the negative. A filmmaker might ask us to print something a certain way — say, dark and red — but Stanley was asking for specific *combinations* of colors."

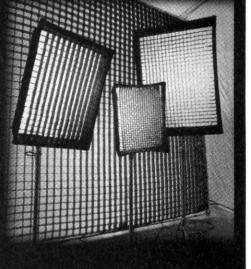
A striking example of this strategy is the Harfords' apartment, with its mix of warm tones and blue light. Although these scenes were lit mainly by practical household fixtures, Smith used other instruments to add the vivid blue tones. "The blue we used was very saturated, much bluer than natural moonlight would be, but we didn't care about that — we just went for a hue that was interesting," Smith says. "I used open-faced clear glass arcs to get that particular color, and to create shafts of light that would bring out the sharpness of the blinds. It was an over-the-top blue, but it complemented the orange light very nicely and gave those scenes an intriguing look."

For close-ups, Smith would duplicate the colors with smaller fixtures. "If we were shooting in blue light, we'd use a blue Chinese lantern for the closer shots," he details. "If we were dealing with the orange hue, I'd simply dim down the household bulbs to get a warmer feeling. Most of the movie is at either extreme — either very rich and warm, or very blue and cold."

Reflecting upon his collaboration with the one of cinema's greatest directors, Smith concludes, "Working with Stanley was a great privilege, and I'm very thankful that I met him and got that chance. However, I don't think my lasting memories of him will necessarily relate to our interactions on the set. The moments I'll always remember will be those times when we'd be in his office or at the house, drinking some coffee and talking about cricket, football or movies. Stanley had a great sense of humor, and he always had this mischievous little twinkle in his eyes. That's what I'll miss the most." ■

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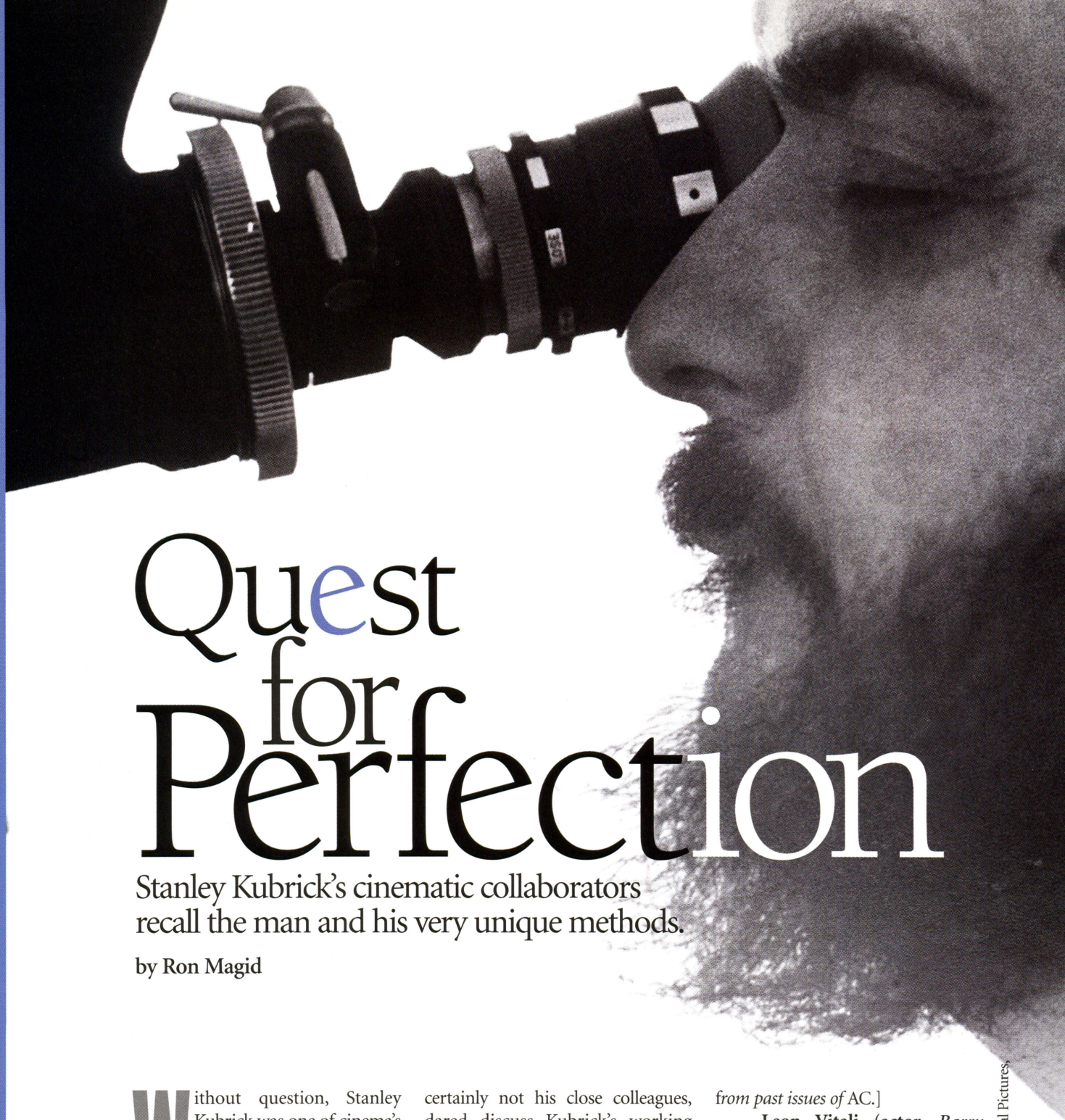
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Quest for Perfection

Stanley Kubrick's cinematic collaborators recall the man and his very unique methods.

by Ron Magid

Without question, Stanley Kubrick was one of cinema's most imposing, exacting, independent, and fiercely original filmmakers. His work, which sometimes took decades to reach the screen, was shrouded in mystery, and once the films were finished, many of the elements that went into them — sets, costumes, props, storyboards and preliminary designs — were destroyed. No one, certainly not his close colleagues, dared discuss Kubrick's working methods — until now. Following the director's untimely death earlier this year at age 70, several of his collaborators agreed to speak with *AC* about this often contradictory man who, it turns out, may not have been so reclusive after all. [*Ed. note: Some of the following comments, including those of the late John Alcott, BSC and Douglas Milsome, BSC, were culled from past issues of* AC.]

Leon Vitali (actor, *Barry Lyndon, Eyes Wide Shut;* personal assistant, *The Shining, Full Metal Jacket, Eyes Wide Shut;* casting director, *Full Metal Jacket, Eyes Wide Shut*): All of this stuff about Stanley being a hermit — he *was* a homebody, but he'd go out and do his own shopping sometimes. How many A-list directors do their own shopping?

Larry Smith (cinematogra-

Photos courtesy of Warner Bros. Universal Pictures, Columbia Pictures and MGM.

pher, *Eyes Wide Shut*): That's a misperception, that Stanley was a recluse — he was far from a recluse. He was certainly a bit shy around people that he'd just met for the first time, but that didn't last long. As soon as he could find something of interest that he could communicate about with that person, he was fine. Stanley had a vast vision of many things. He was an intellectual, no question about it, even though he didn't come from an intellectual background. His father was a doctor, but Stanley was self-taught. He read books, and he could hold his own talking about anything from politics to religion to sport — you name it.

Stanley also had a very warm, earthy side as well. When I went into the kitchen at his house, he'd come 'round, make some coffee and ask, 'Do you want some toast, do you want something to eat?' He'd put some toast in, and the toast would invariably get burnt. He would take it out with his hand and whack it on the table to get rid of the burnt crumbs. 'Let's find a knife and put some butter on it,' he'd say. There'd be a mess all over the place, and the coffee would get spilled. To me, that was fantastic. I'd think to myself, 'Stanley Kubrick is making *me* tea and toast!' You don't realize how important those little things are until the person dies and you realize that you're never going to do them again.

Ken Adam (production designer, *Dr. Strangelove, Barry Lyndon*): Stanley was hoping to do all of *Barry Lyndon* — or most of it — within literally 30 miles of his home in Elstree. At the time, *A Clockwork Orange* was a great success, but he had received a lot of threatening letters, which made him a bit reluctant to go to far-off locations. I told him that I couldn't see that plan working out, because I knew where the suitable stately homes were situated, and with one or two exceptions, they certainly weren't within that radius of Stanley's house!



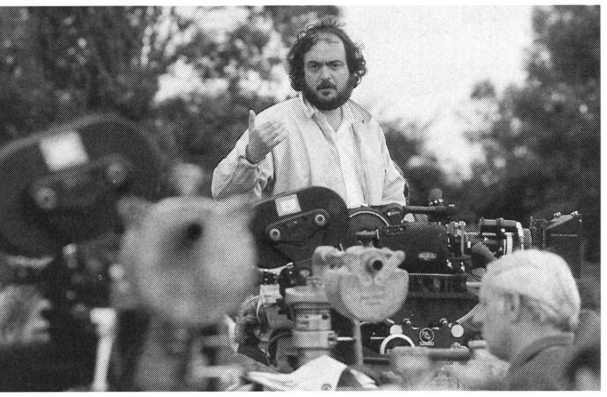
Opposite: Kubrick displays unwavering concentration at the eyepiece of a camera. This page, top: Humbert Humbert (James Mason) paints the pubescent toes of his beloved nymphette (Sue Lyon) in *Lolita* (1962). To circumvent censors' concerns, Kubrick infused author Vladimir Nabokov's infamous tale of pedophilic obsession with a wry, sardonic edge. Below: "Mein Führer, I can valk!" In the anti-nuclear satire *Dr. Strangelove* (1964), the titular madman (Peter Sellers) astounds General Buck Turgidson (George C. Scott) by rising from his wheelchair in the United States' War Room.

His stance on the matter was enormously frustrating for me, but eventually, after five or six months, I got him to look at some of the stately homes [further away], and then to go to Ireland to shoot the Irish locations. Of course, once we were in Ireland, he wanted to do all of the continental sequences there, too.

John Alcott, BSC (camera assistant/cinematographer, *2001: A Space Odyssey;* cinematographer, *A Clockwork Orange, Barry Lyndon, The Shining*): When you're with Stanley, the working relationship benefits from picture to picture. We've collaborated together since 1965, and in working with him, there is always a different outlook, a different idea: 'Let's try something different. Is there any way of doing this differently? Is there any way of making this much better than it was before?' I feel that when you have as much time as we had on *The Shining* to make sure that the sets are right and that the art director is building them to your lighting design, it is a



Quest for Perfection



Above: Kubrick rallies his troops on the set of *Barry Lyndon* (1975), a sweeping 18th-century drama that details the misadventures of an opportunistic Irishman. The picture's lush period photography earned an Oscar for cinematographer John Alcott, BSC. Below: Having successfully married into the gentry, Barry (Ryan O'Neal) enjoys a triumphant smoke, willfully oblivious to the annoyance it causes his listless bride, Lady Lyndon (Marisa Berenson).

great privilege. You don't have that privilege when you work with somebody who lacks the visual perception that Stanley has. He is willing to bend over backwards to give you something you may desire in the way of a new lighting technique, which is a great help. As time goes on, Stanley has become more thorough and more exacting in his demands. One has to go away after having done a film with him, gather knowledge, come back, and try to put that knowledge together with his knowledge into another film. He is, and I've said this before, very demanding. He demands perfection, but he will give you all the help you need if he thinks that whatever you want to do will accomplish the desired result. He will give you full power to do it — but, at the same time, it must work. (From *AC* Aug. 1980.)

Garrett Brown (Steadicam operator, *The Shining*): Stanley is correctly reported to be in charge of every detail, and interested in everything from the air-conditioning to the nature of lunch. On *The Shining,* we were working at Ellstree studios in Hertfordshire for a year, but at the end we needed to go on location in Hampstead Hospital (about 7 miles away), and we began debating about what would be the fastest way to transport the crew down there. Stanley's idea was that cars would be faster, but I maintained, 'The underground is by far the quickest way.' He didn't believe it, so I said, 'Come with me, I'll show you! I subsequently had the great joy of taking Kubrick for a ride on the London underground — which he hadn't been aboard for 20 years. He was looking around as if he had just arrived from Mars. He had never seen ads and things underground, and he thought it was amazingly dirty. Of course, nobody knew who he was; they probably thought he was a mildly retarded fellow who was having a great time on the train. It was really quite fun, and of course, we beat his driver by an enormous margin, but we still ended up traveling by road.

Gilbert Taylor, BSC (cinematographer, *Dr. Strangelove*): Stanley hated being airborne, so during prep on *Strangelove,* I did about 28,000 miles in a B-17 Flying Fortress, shooting aerial material [for the background plates]. I remember the night we took off; it was pitch black at about four o'clock in the afternoon, and we were going up with the Fortress to Iceland and then Greenland. It was semi-snowing at the London airport, and suddenly someone said, 'Stanley's here.' I thought to myself, 'Oh, Christ! Not now!' He came on the plane and said to my mechanic, 'The camera mountings are too tight.' I'd done a lot of that sort of work in my time, and I wanted those mountings to be absolutely solid with the airplane, and not all flippy-floppy. When he began his critique, I said to the pilot, 'Can you start one engine?' He fired the engine up, and Stanley literally *flew* off the plane! As soon as he was out the door, I had them tighten those bolts right up again.

Diane Taylor (Gil Taylor's wife; plate continuity on *Dr. Strangelove*): I'd done continuity for Disney on a couple of pictures, so I was desperately trying to get on [*Strangelove*]. I asked [actor] Peter Sellers about it, and he said, 'No problem, I'll ask Stanley!' Well, being very young and naive, I didn't realize that you didn't ask actors to do that sort of thing. The next time [Stanley] phoned, I asked, 'Could I come and see you?' I went to his office and said, 'I'd like to do the continuity on your film, please.' There was a total, terrible silence, and he replied, 'What's your relationship with Peter Sellers?' I said, 'There isn't one at all.' Stanley told me, 'You're very young, and I don't think you could really manage this, but you could probably do the flying stuff. Have you flown?' I answered, 'Oh, yes!' — I said 'Oh, yes!' to everything. And he said, 'Come up with some sort of system that would convince me that we could keep track of every [shot].' I went away and came up with a kind of nautical system for the cameras,



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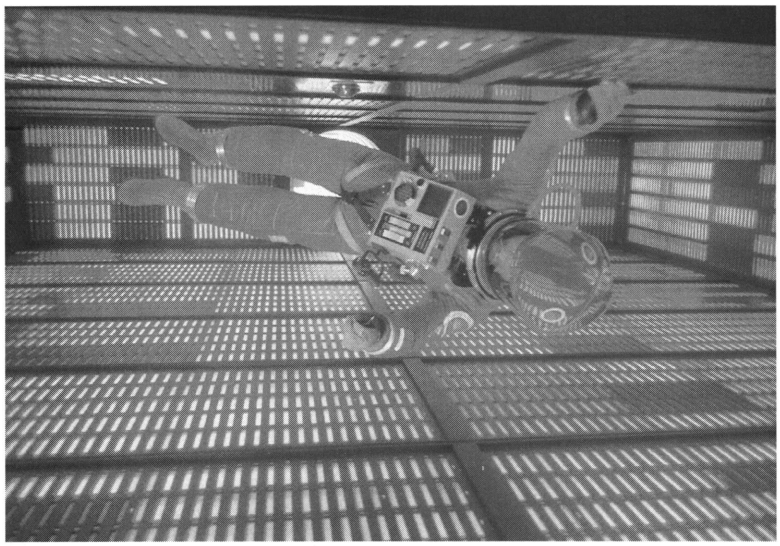
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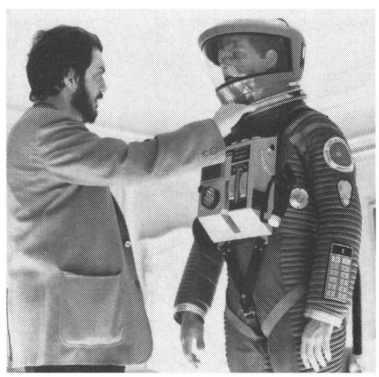


Right: In the sci-fi classic *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), astronaut David Bowman (Keir Dullea) confronts the treacherous HAL-9000 computer (memorably voiced by Douglas Rain). Center: Kubrick inspects Dullea's spacesuit while shooting the film's mind-blowing climax. The picture earned an Academy Award for Best Visual Effects.

port and starboard, using colors and numbers. He told me, 'If you'd like to go ahead, okay!' [Afterwards], Stanley — the silly billy — cut off all of these things I'd prepared! He found himself in a terrible pickle, because he couldn't remember what we'd got and where we'd done it! I don't know why [he did that]. He was a law unto himself.

Garrett Brown: After five takes, anyone else in the world would have considered my shot okay. After 14, it was what even I would consider perfect. But after 30, I was entering new realms. I was really conscious of where this foot or that finger went, as if I was a dancer on Broadway night after night, who learned every floorboard in the stage. It was fantastic. When we saw the dailies, the [Steadicam shots] were as smooth and accurate as a dolly and a great deal less constrained.

Dan Richter (played "Moonwatcher" and served as choreographer for the ape scenes on *2001*): First of all, you have to understand one thing about Stanley: I never saw him get angry. He just kept working, you know? Once something was right, he moved on to the next thing, but if it wasn't there yet, he just kept at it! Now, that might mean 40 takes, an extra eight months, tearing the whole set down



and redoing it, or reshooting completely. The process involved a lot of refinement, and we did a lot of testing — over and over and over again. But I loved the guy for it, because that's the way *I* liked to work!

Chester Eyre (director of operations, Deluxe Laboratories U.K.): My association with Stanley began when I served as one of the timers on *A Clockwork Orange*. Working with him was very interesting, because he was obviously a very important producer/director, and we were all in awe of him. Everyone who's ever worked with the man has learned a lot from him — about both the industry and themselves. He always managed to draw more out of you than you thought was there.

I began working more closely with Stanley on *Full Metal Jacket*, and he showed me that there was nothing that couldn't be achieved if you set your mind to it. He could never understand why people weren't as absorbed with everything as he was. For example, there was one point on *Full Metal Jacket* where he wanted a special kind of gate made for a camera, and he telephoned an expert who had long since retired. He called me the next day and said, 'I can't believe it. I offered this man the chance to make a special gate for me, and he told me, 'I'm sorry, I've retired.' He simply couldn't understand why the man didn't share his enthusiasm.

Leon Vitali: I can't understand why an actor complains when a director wants to do more takes, because it's just an opportunity to do different things, and to give the scene another slant. Stanley was a wonderful director to work with as an actor. From the first day I met him on [*Barry Lyndon*], it was just a wonderful relationship. He was a very, very open person to talk to. He also had a unique way of working: it would only be you, whoever you were acting with, and him. Everyone else disappeared; there were no cameras, and nobody else was on the set, so you'd be very, very focused. During that time, he'd be looking for angles through his Arriflex viewfinder. You always had to do the scene for real, even if you were rehearsing, because you never know what's going to happen. The entire course of the scene could change. If it wasn't clicking for some reason, we'd all go to his caravan and work on the scene. He'd say, 'Well, how would you say this? How would you do this?' All the time, he was probing you to find what it was *you* were trying find.

It was just the most magical experience to work for this man, and it happened on *Eyes Wide Shut* as well, because I was working for him as an actor again [playing the man in the red cloak in the orgy sequence]. We hadn't really discussed my role in any detail whatsoever, and he didn't say anything to me through the

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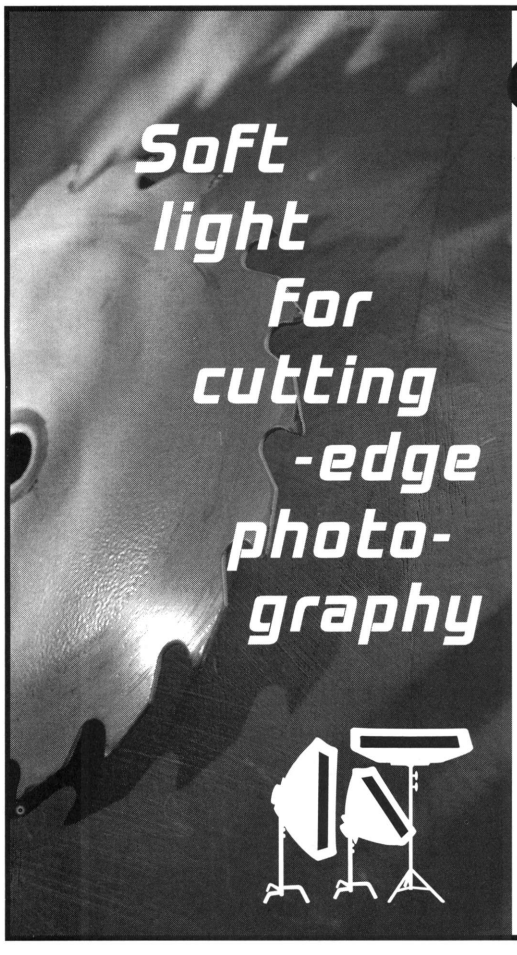
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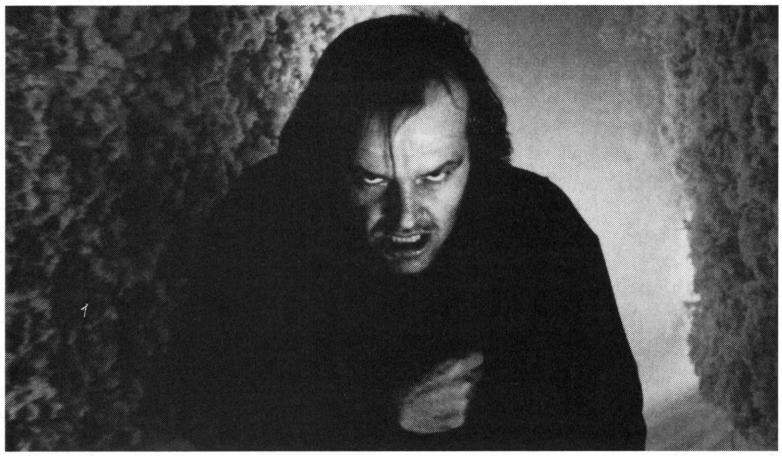
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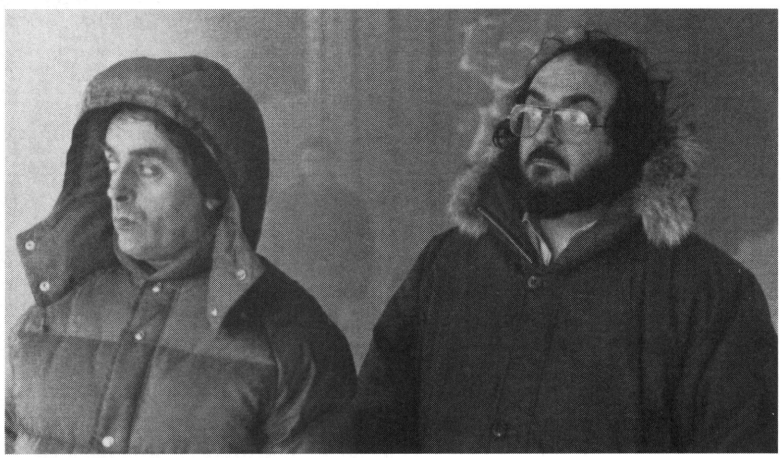
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whole first day of shooting. I found our interaction to be almost like a sort of a teasing game, and Stanley finally said, 'I haven't said anything to you. Just keep doing what you're doing. It's almost like a sadistic English schoolmaster talking to this unfortunate pupil.' I just developed that idea more and more [as I confronted Tom Cruise's character]. My tone was sarcastic and kind; it wasn't brutal and sort of, 'Remove your mask!' It was all very, 'May I have the password, please?' Everything was very polite, which made it a bit more threatening, really. I felt exactly how I felt when we were doing *Barry Lyndon*. Stanley gave me a wonderful freedom.

Douglas Milsome, BSC (camera assistant, *A Clockwork Orange, The Shining*; cinematographer, *Full Metal Jacket*): I've actually had a much harder time working with a lot less talented people than Stanley Kubrick. He's a drain because he saps you dry, but he works damn hard himself and expects everybody else to. Sometimes it becomes a plod because it's so slow and intricate, but he loves to do things quite differently than they've been done before. You can't really do that sort of thing off the top of your head, so you work very hard to get it together and make something different which bears his mark. Sometimes the relationship can get a little strained because you've got to be devoted to him. You eat, drink and sleep the movie, and you're under contract to Stanley body and soul. But he allows you the time to get everything absolutely right, which is what I find so rewarding. (From *AC* Sept. 1987.)

Martin Hunter (editor, *Full Metal Jacket*): *Full Metal Jacket* was my first feature. [Stanley taught me] that to impart the intended emotion of the scene, it's crucial that the reactions be precisely correct. Many [directors] believe that reactions are something you pick up at the end of a scene; they'll just run the camera





Top: Psychotic hotel-sitter Jack Torrance (Jack Nicholson) stalks his son through a frigid outdoor maze in *The Shining* (1980), Kubrick's memorable foray into the horror genre. Bottom: Cinematographer John Alcott, BSC and Kubrick, protected from the cold by parkas, examine the grounds at the fictional Overlook Hotel.

and say, 'That'll do,' which is not the best way to do it. [Stanley] would shoot take after take of people who were only observers in the scene, and didn't have any dialogue. Then, as we were cutting it, he'd comb through the material exhaustively. I remember saying to him once, 'Stanley, would you ever consider looking at a couple of takes and picking a reaction shot that works, and not bother to look at the others?' He looked at me in some shock and replied, 'I'd never think of doing that. So much work has gone into it so far, why not take it to its conclusion?'

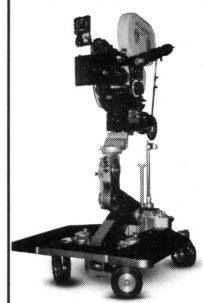
Ken Adam: On *Strangelove*, it wasn't so much the time one had to spend — it was Stanley's continuous questioning of 'What makes you tick?' That could be soul-destroying. He wanted everything that I did to be justified, and that I found very trying. You finally are liable to lose your self-confidence if everything you do is being questioned, but that was because he wanted to make absolutely sure, intellectually, that what I came up with was right. For me, design, like so many other creative processes, is instinctive. Stanley knew practically every other job as well as and better than most of the other film technicians — he certainly knew photography and had a brilliant visual sense — but he didn't really know design!

Gilbert Taylor: It's pretty well universally known that Stanley was a frustrated director of photography,

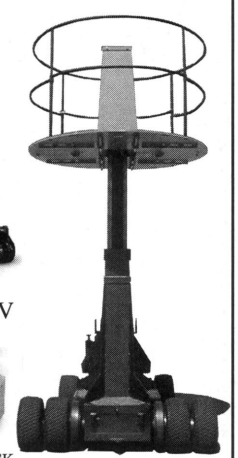
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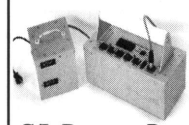
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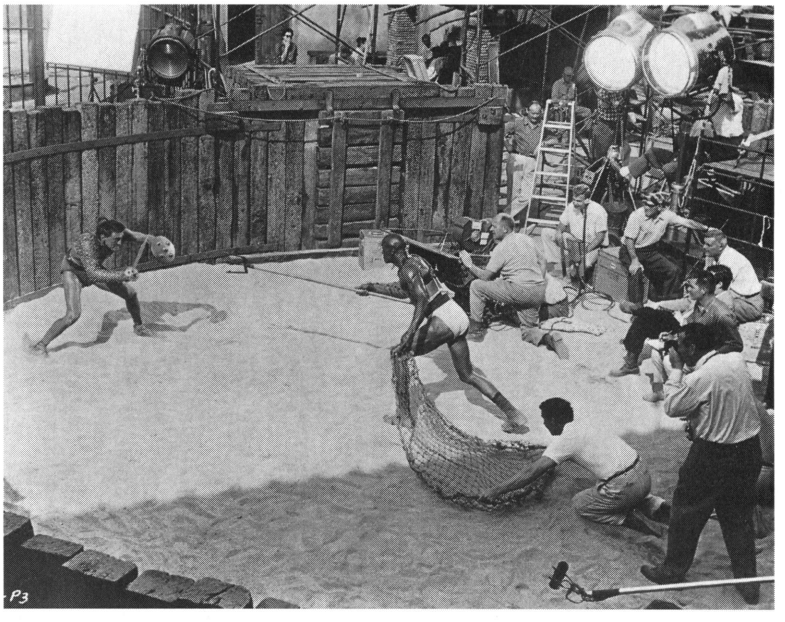
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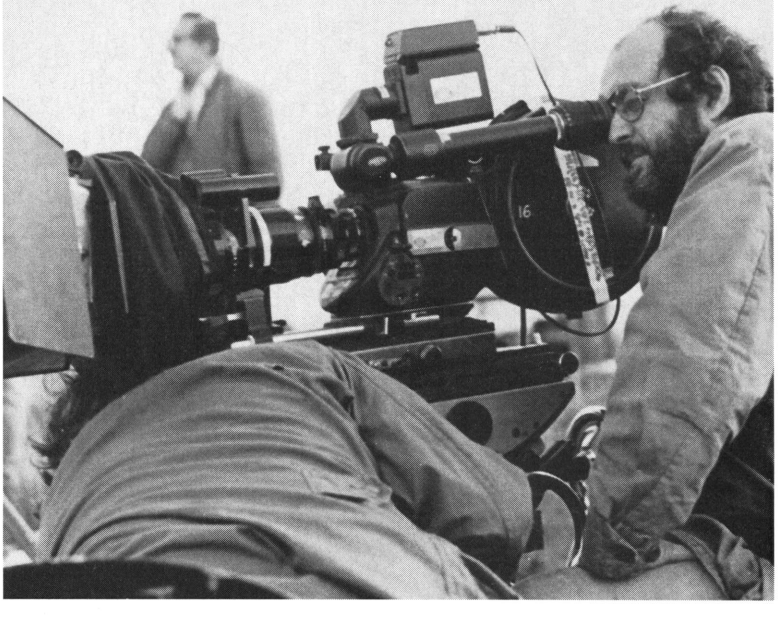


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Quest for Perfection







Above: A belligerent Marine drill sergeant (R. Lee Ermey) hazes his obedient "pukes" in *Full Metal Jacket* (1987). Upper right: In a memorable scene from *Spartacus* (1960), a pair of gladiators (Kirk Douglas and Woody Strode) are forced to square off for the amusement of imperious Romans. Camera operator George Dye frames the shot under the watchful eye of cinematographer Russell Metty, ASC (no cap, seated directly behind Dye), who earned an Oscar for his efforts. Lower right: Kubrick takes aim. Opposite: Colonel Dax (Kirk Douglas) ponders a moral and military dilemma in the stirring anti-war drama *Paths of Glory* (1957).

among other things. I never had any trouble with him, though. He had a habit of taking Polaroids and saying, 'I think you've got too much light on this.' And I'd say, 'Well, your Polaroids might have too much light, but on my negative it's dead right!' I mean, that's the sort of thing you had to put up with. He was a completely one-man band, but he was very talented!

Martin Hunter: Stanley once quoted Napoleon to me: 'A general should be able lead a cavalry charge or boil a chicken.' The first time I actually had a conversation with him was when I was an assistant sound editor, and we were doing the mix [on *The Shining*] at Elstree Studios. He had caterers bring food into the mixing theater. He didn't want anybody to take off and have long lunches — he wanted to make sure we were all captive there. Tables were laid out, and by the time I'd got my food, there was no room at any table but his! He was sitting there with his daughter, Vivian, and I felt somewhat embarrassed about sitting by the great man. I guess I had thought he was remote and unapproachable until I met him, but then I found him immediately approachable, and we just kind of chatted. He was incredibly interested in people's lives and the sorts of mundane details that would be a total surprise to people who didn't know him. When you knew him, you'd be surprised at just how 'normal' a person he was.

Gilbert Taylor: You didn't have a lot of fun with Stanley, because if anybody laughed out loud on the set, they got removed from the floor. He hated anybody who laughed [while working]; we certainly weren't allowed to laugh on *Dr. Strangelove.*

Larry Smith: Stanley and I had a good understanding because we laughed at a lot of things. He was a very humorous man. A lot of people don't understand that about Stanley; he was the funniest fellow you could ever meet. He told some incredibly funny stories and jokes. I'm quite an effervescent sort of person when I'm shooting, and I used to joke with him all the time, sometimes in very serious situations.

Martin Hunter: Between *The Shining* and *Full Metal Jacket* I used to do everything for Stanley, from taking meetings with the top brass at Technicolor to occasionally feeding the cats and walking the dog. When we were dealing with the restoration of *Dr. Strangelove*, one of the people

at Technicolor asked me what my title was, and I said, 'I'm not sure. I'll get back to you.' When I asked Stanley what my title was, he asked me, 'What's this other guy's title?' I said, 'He's Director of Operations.' And he replied, 'Tell him you're my Director of Operations.'

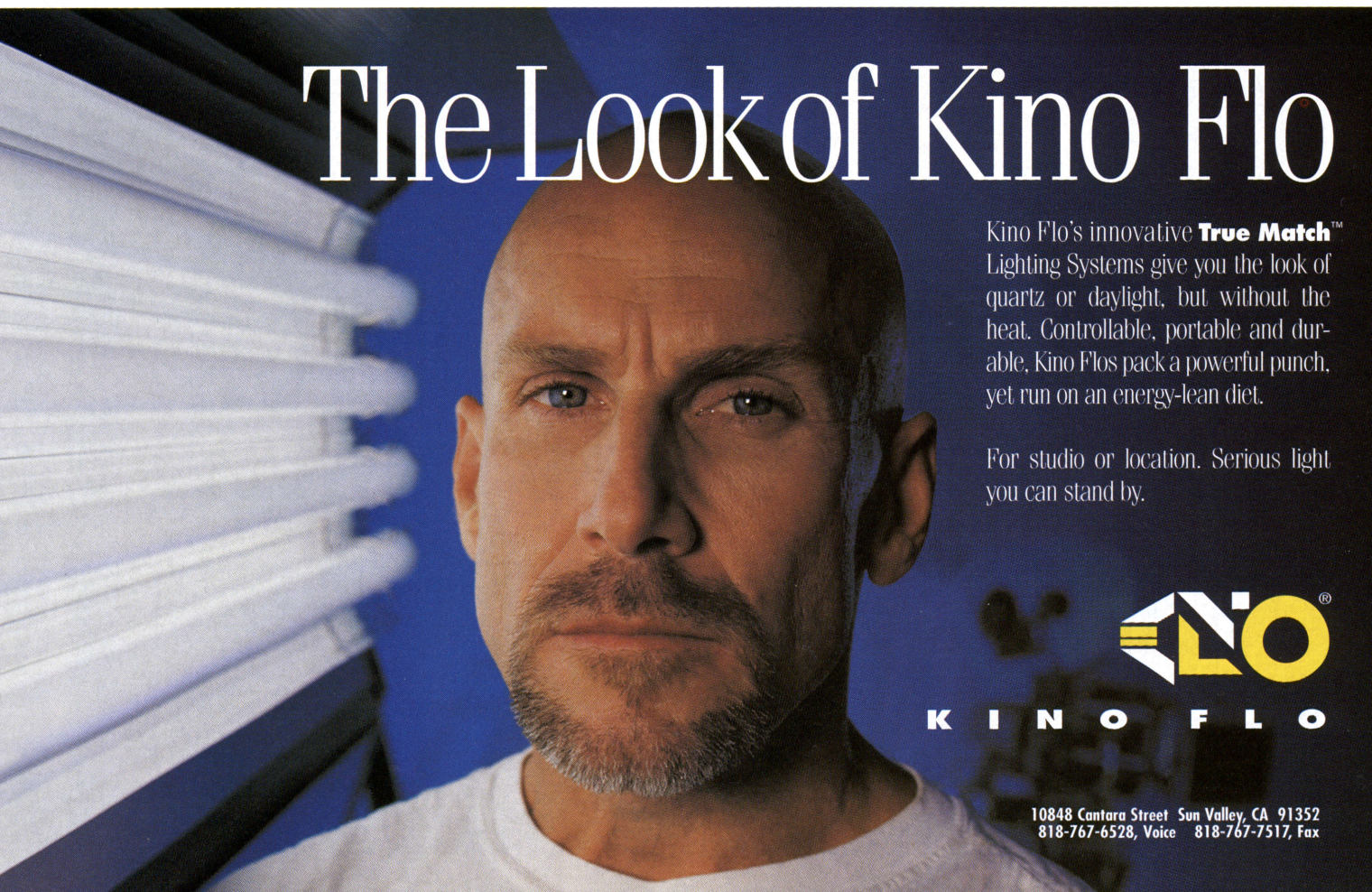
Ken Adam: [On *Barry Lyndon*,] Stanley had my continuity sketch artist do hundreds of sketches using various lenses on groups of soldiers, to see how they would look through a 50mm or wide-angle lens. We also experimented with having the first line of infantry in proper uniforms, the second line in paper uniforms, the third line as cutouts, and so on, [and shooting with them] on a limited scale. I always felt that he put such a great amount of effort into the attack and defense sequences because he was thinking of *Napoleon*, and this approach would have been of vital importance on that project.

Chris Cunningham (animatronics effect expert, who was helping Kubrick develop the unfilmed science-fiction project *A.I.*): I met Stanley in late 1994, and I worked with him all through '95. He wanted to see if a [synthetic] child could be made using animatronics to avoid digital effects work, and I was trying to talk him into doing it using computer graphics because I don't think animatronics are very good. The ironic thing about it was that I was a cynical animatronics person, and it was almost like building an animatronic boy as perfectly as possible would only serve to show him that it still would never be perfect enough.

Dennis Muren, ASC (ILM visual effects supervisor, consultant on *A.I.*): He wanted the kid to look sort of real but not real. I just remember that he was always searching. That's the way I'm going to remember Stanley — always searching. I don't think he ever just looked at something and said, 'That's it.'



Ned Gorman (ILM visual effects producer, consultant on *A.I.*): It seemed to me that getting a 'Stanley Kubrick' performance from this CG kid was going to be really problematic. That's my personal opinion, but I have a sense that he was so hands-on it would have been almost impossible for him to work



with an animation director and get what he wanted. Something I didn't quite say to him was that if his live-action pictures took two years to post — given his well-deserved reputation for perfection — I could see something like this going on for five years. Presented with the infinite palette of possibilities digital techniques allow, Stanley would have created something amazing, but it could have been tough for him to know when to stop. He was the master and I mourn for the films we won't see.

Ty Ruben Ellingson (*A.I.* preproduction effects artist): Kubrick wanted a lot of extra frames on the head and tail of every effects shot. He wanted to be able to say, 'I want this kid to go pick up a ball and walk to the next room,' and he really wanted it from before and after. I think in a weird sense, he was playing back to his strengths. By leaving an unknown in there, it was like shooting all of those takes: he was leaving himself an option to move around a little bit.

Dennis Muren: Stanley lived on the telephone, just sort of keeping up with things, like where is digital [technology] at? The last time I heard from him, he left me a voicemail and said he'd call me back up at about 9 o'clock. I counted out the time difference [between England and the U.S.], and that was about 5 a.m. his time! I think he just lived at night. He was always up late, at least until 1 or 2 o'clock, because that's when I would often talk to him. I think it was because he always needed to talk to people in the States. Everybody got phone calls from him. He would call ILM and ask for me, and if I wasn't there, he would say, 'Well, can you put me in touch with somebody in optical?' I think John Knoll got a call like that, and I know Stefan Fangmeyer got a call like that. I was even getting calls at home on Sundays. I still don't know how he got my home number.

Gilbert Taylor: Stanley used to telephone me at home, at around midnight, and say, 'Gil, I want to buy a camera, what shall I buy? And what should I buy along with it?' He'd spend a whole hour talking to me about which camera he should buy — it was nothing whatsoever to do with [his current] movie or anything! I'd talk to him about it, say 'Bye-bye, Stanley,' and not hear from him for another year. He was a very strange man.

Ed DiGiulio (President of Cinema Products, supplier of camera equipment for *A Clockwork Orange, Barry Lyndon, The Shining, Full Metal Jacket* and *Eyes Wide Shut*): Stanley's death was shocking. I really enjoyed interacting with him, and I still feel a great love for him. He

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was persistent, insistent, eager for the technology — eager to understand it, deal with it, and use it. You had mixed emotions with Stanley. Generally speaking, my attitude always was, 'What are you bugging me for? Get out of here!' But then I began to respect and admire him, and to appreciate that he was a true filmmaker. Since then, I've often said that filmmaking is an art form, and its palette is technology. Stanley kept pushing the envelope to actually use technology to enhance his filmmaking and storytelling.

Dennis Muren: Stanley's death was a terrible loss. You'd think that you just wouldn't hear from him for awhile, but the calls would just keep on coming, even after he turned 70. His passing was a real shock and a tragedy; the guy was just great. I mean, he's one of the few people whose movies are totally *him*. Nobody else could copy him, and he wasn't trying to copy anybody else. He was a real artist.

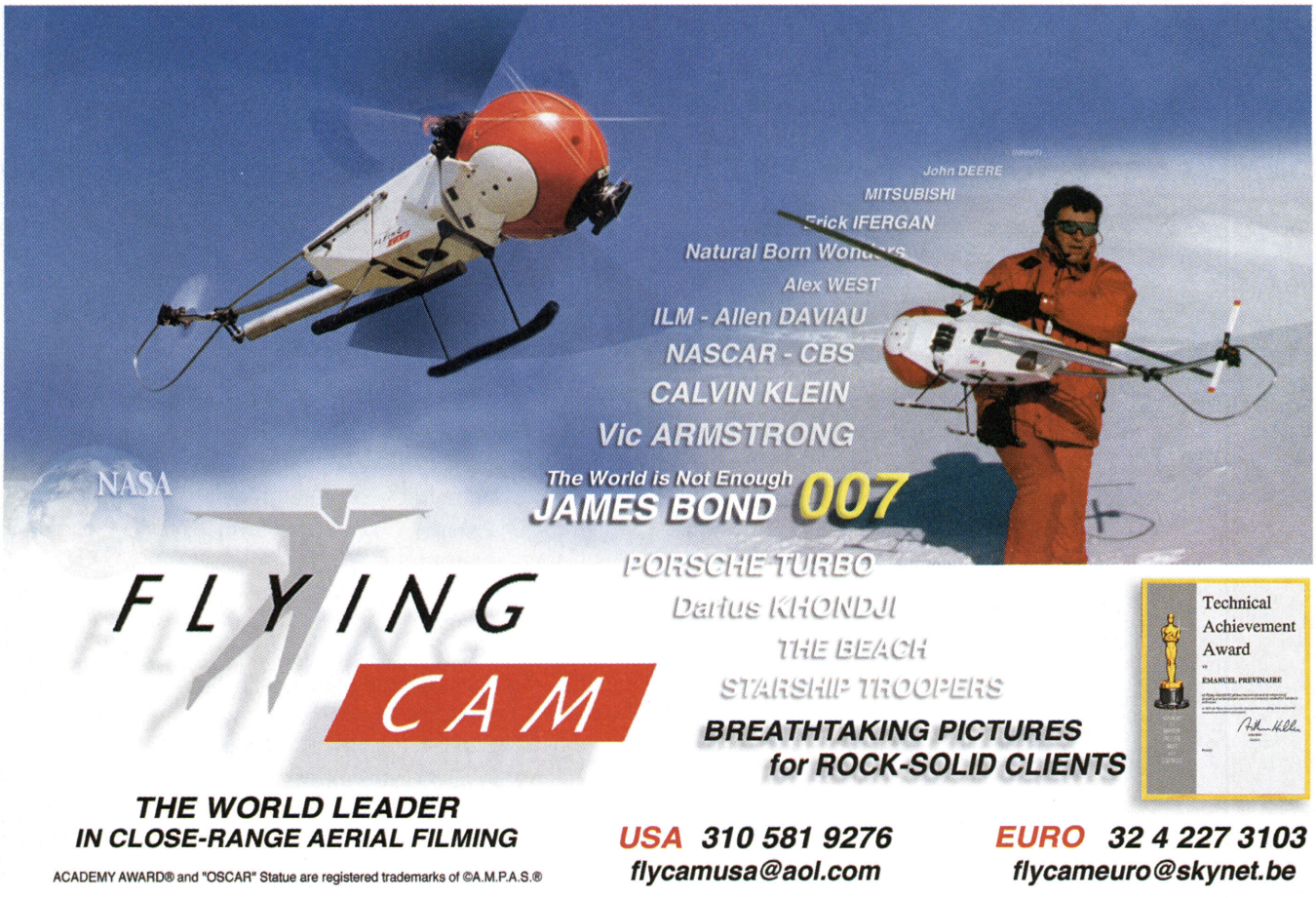
Garrett Brown: My first reaction was perhaps the best sort of feeling one could have at the death of a true artist: I was just sorry that I wouldn't get to see any more of his movies. I won't ever get to see *A.I.* or *Napoleon*.

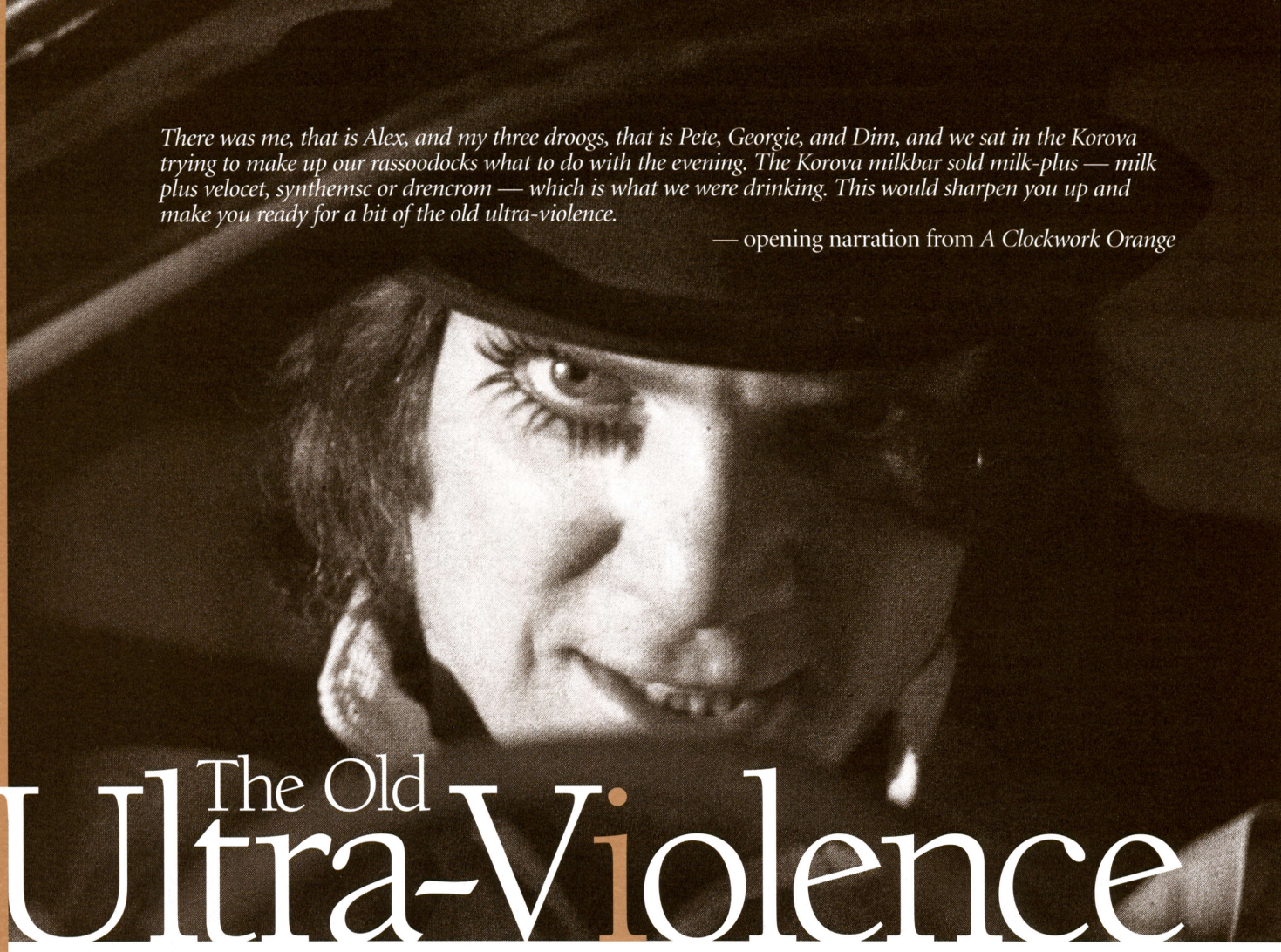
Ken Adam: I had just arrived in New York, where I'd been invited by the Lincoln Center Film Society to give a lecture on design, and two producer friends met us at the airport to tell us about it. I paid tribute to Stanley at the lecture, and it was really heartfelt. I don't think I'll ever have that sort of relationship with a director again. I recently found some very interesting correspondence from Stanley, and it's really very touching. You know, we were really like a sort of marriage!

Gilbert Taylor: I was amazed. I thought, 'Gosh, somebody put something in his coffee,' or something like that! I didn't think it was natural, because he was the sort of figure that would still be around at 90, you know?

Martin Hunter: I sent Stanley a fax on his 70th birthday, and he sent me back a fax thanking me for my fax! That was our last communication. [His death] came as a huge shock, and it was very sad. I came to terms with it by deciding that Stanley had left us in the way he'd done everything else: it was entirely unexpected. He had seemed immortal, but he just fooled us all again! ■

Additional material for this piece was provided by Stephen Pizzello, and excerpted from AC *issues Jan. 1961 and May '91* (Spartacus), *June '68 and Oct. '69* (2001: A Space Odyssey), *Mar. '76* (Barry Lyndon), *Aug. '80* (The Shining), *and Sept. '87* (Full Metal Jacket).





There was me, that is Alex, and my three droogs, that is Pete, Georgie, and Dim, and we sat in the Korova trying to make up our rassoodocks what to do with the evening. The Korova milkbar sold milk-plus — milk plus velocet, synthemsc or drencrom — which is what we were drinking. This would sharpen you up and make you ready for a bit of the old ultra-violence.

— opening narration from *A Clockwork Orange*

The Old Ultra-Violence

Director Stanley Kubrick lent a learned eye to *A Clockwork Orange*, enlisting lighting cameraman John Alcott, BSC to help create a bleak dystopian futurescape.

by Vincent LoBrutto

When *A Clockwork Orange* was released in 1971, the nightmarish near-future world depicted in the film seemed closer to reality than ever. The "free love" mood of the Sixties was officially over. Hippies were being retired and the boils of punk nihilism were beginning to fester. Watergate loomed up ahead, and "sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll" was the youth culture's new mantra.

Almost a decade earlier, British author Anthony Burgess had presaged a violent, amoral future with the publication of the 1962 novella upon which director Stanley Kubrick's notorious film version would be based. A first-person narrative, *Clockwork* was written in the cryptic lingo of its protagonist, the sociopathic Alex DeLarge (played in the film by Malcolm McDowell), a teenage Beethoven-loving hooligan. He and his trio of criminal cohorts engage in fights, muggings, rape, and other assorted viciousness until our self-described "humble narrator" is convicted of a sadistic murder. After landing in prison, Alex feigns religious salvation and volunteers for an experimental reconditioning cure, under the assurance that he will be released if it proves successful. The "Ludovico Technique" — a Pavlovian-response aversion therapy designed to dampen violent urges — renders Alex incapable of committing new crimes, but its programming also leaves him defenseless when confronted by old enemies. Found and tortured by the deranged writer husband of a woman he had fatally attacked, Alex is transformed into a *cause célèbre* by an overzealous media and conniving politicians decrying the inhumanity of his situ-

Photos courtesy of Warner Bros. Archives.

ation. The debate becomes philosophical: should man tamper with human behavior? In the end, Alex is released from the Ludovico spell and again unleashed upon the world.

The *Clockwork* novella was Burgess's attempt to deal with and transform a personal tragedy. During World War II, while he was stationed overseas, the writer's pregnant wife was savagely beaten in London by four American deserters, causing the couple to lose their unborn child. Afterward, the wife attempted suicide and Burgess self-destructively turned to the bottle. His later observations of various street gangs — including their fetishistic dress codes — served as additional inspiration. In regard to his work's oblique title, the author noted, "The book was called *A Clockwork Orange* for various reasons. I had always loved the Cockney phrase 'queer as a clockwork orange,' that being the queerest thing imaginable, and I had saved up the expression for years, hoping someday to use it as a title. When I began to write the book, I saw that this title would be appropriate for a story about the application of Pavlovian, or mechanical, laws to an organism which, like a fruit, was capable of color and sweetness. But I had also served [during the war] in Malaya, where the word for a human being is *orang*."

Two years after the publication of *A Clockwork Orange*, director Stanley Kubrick virtually defined the black-comedy genre with *Dr. Strangelove, Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*, his indictment of the Cold War. A prophetic glimpse into a fatalistic future, the film was ironic, pessimistic, and pristine in its technical perfection. In 1966, screenwriter and novelist Terry Southern, who had collaborated with Kubrick on *Strangelove*, sent a copy of *Clockwork* to the filmmaker, who didn't immediately respond to the proposed project. Southern was so passionate about the cinematic possibilities of the story that he purchased a six-month option on the novella for about $1,000 against a purchase price of $10,000, with percentages to be worked out later. He then wrote an adaptation which he sent to several producers, including David Puttnam. In order to determine whether the material would be deemed acceptable by the British film censor, Lord Chamberlain, Puttnam and Southern submitted their *Clockwork* script. It was sent back unopened, with the remark, "I know the book, and there's no point in reading this script because it involves youthful defiance of authority and we're not doing that."



In late 1969, Kubrick finally responded to Southern's *Clockwork* suggestion and asked if he still had control of the property. Southern had renewed the yearly option once, but was then unable to pay the $1,000 fee. His lawyer, Si Litvinoff, and friend, Max Raab, had picked up the option. Upon hearing that Kubrick was interested, they sold it to the filmmaker for a hefty profit. Southern said the fee was approximately $75,000, but other sources say Litvinoff and Raab were given $200,000 and a five-percent profit clause, which represented a potential windfall of about $1.2 million. Southern subsequently sent the director his adaptation of the novel and received a letter stating, "Mr. Kubrick has decided to try his own hand." The filmmaker completed a first draft on May 15, 1970. It was the first time the director had worked alone on a screenplay.



Kubrick was just the man to adapt *A Clockwork Orange* into a film. He would ultimately create a nasty, violent, and morbidly funny look ahead to the youth culture of the Eighties and Nineties, while delivering the bad but pragmatic news that man can't really change his nature. At the dawn of the Seventies, Kubrick's career was in its second decade. During the mid-Forties, he had been a *wunderkind* still photographer for *Look* magazine, beginning his association with the publication shortly before he turned 17. In 1951,

Opposite: The dandified Alex (Malcolm McDowell) and his gang play "hogs of the road" in a "Durango 95" hot rod. Exaggerated rear-projection plates lend the action a surrealistic feel. This page, left: The droogs take a break from their games at the Korova Milkbar, which is revealed in a long pullback move that actor McDowell describes as "one of the great opening sequences." The shot was accomplished with both a zoom lens and a dolly. Below: Kubrick at the wheel of his Mitchell BNC.

The Old Ultra-Violence



Kubrick supervises a sinister scene in which the heavily backlit droogs torment a "filthy old drunkie," who receives a beating he won't soon forget.

he became a filmmaker and photographed two shorts, *Day of the Fight* and *Flying Padre*. A formidable cameraman, Kubrick continued to photograph his own work on the features *Fear and Desire* and *Killer's Kiss*. However, while making *The Killing* in 1956, he had his first collaborative relationship with a director of photography — Lucien Ballard, ASC. The situation proved thorny. Ballard was a respected Hollywood veteran who had shot such pictures as *The Devil Is a Woman* and *Crime and Punishment*. Kubrick demanded control over every visual detail, including composition and lens choice, and by sheer strength of ego he imposed his will on the seasoned professional. This became a pattern of behavior over the director's subsequent pictures.

On *Paths of Glory*, Kubrick hired German cameraman George Krause, who had photographed *Man on a Tightrope* for Elia Kazan. German rules allowed Kubrick to operate the camera himself, affording him the hands-on control he desired. *Spartacus* is the only film directed by Kubrick over which he did not have total control of the production. His relationship with Russell Metty, ASC, whose credits included *Bringing Up Baby* and *Touch of Evil*, was a disaster for Kubrick, who was not able to impart his vision to the strong-minded director of photography. (Ironically, Metty earned an Academy Award for his expert work; see *AC* Jan. 1961 and May '91). *Lolita* was shot by Oswald Morris, BSC and *Dr. Strangelove* was photographed by Gilbert Taylor, BSC. The "English" rules of production, which give the director autonomy over camera operation, allowed Kubrick to select the shots, lenses, and framing on both of these pictures, while the two fine cinematographers executed his lighting plans. Kubrick's ensuing work with Geoffrey Unsworth, BSC on *2001: A Space Odyssey* helped to forge a new era in contemporary cinematography through the reinvention and refinement of special effects techniques that had long been practiced in Hollywood and Britain. Toward the end of the lengthy and involved shooting schedule, however, Unsworth asked to move on to other commitments, and his assistant, John Alcott, took over.

Born in London in 1931, Alcott started out at Gainsborough Studios, where his father was a production manager, and worked as a focus puller on such productions as *The Singer Not the Song, Whistle Down the Wind, The Main Attraction* and *Tamahine*. Among the material he shot for *2001* was the "Dawn of Man" sequence, which made extensive used of a unique front-projection system (see *AC* June 1968). For *A Clockwork Orange*, Kubrick promoted Alcott to the key photographic position and gave him the credit of lighting cameraman. "*A Clockwork Orange* employed a darker, more obviously dramatic type of photography," Alcott told *AC* in 1976. "It was a modern story taking place in an advanced period of the 1980s — although the period was never actually pinpointed in the picture. It called for a really cold, stark style of photography."

Kubrick's adaptation of the novel is depicted in three segments. In the first, Alex and his gang terrorize the locals with their lust for sex and violence. Next, Alex is imprisoned and selected for the Ludovico treatment. Finally, after his release, Alex's victims get their revenge, but in the end, Alex's glee for mayhem returns — man cannot alter his fate. Each of the three sections has a distinctive color palette and camera style that expresses the narrative. To depict Alex's fondness for "ultra-violence," Kubrick and Alcott employed a bright color presentation with high-key lighting, fluid zooms, and dolly shots. Alex's time in prison and reprogramming is rendered in cool, flat tones, as long takes and subtle camera moves create a somber and then clinical atmosphere. The last segment returns to the environment of the first, but is rendered in gray and low-key tones. Flatter lighting and desaturated colors help to define Alex's comeuppance.

Understanding that filmmaking is as much a mechanical craft as it is an artistic endeavor, Kubrick has always kept abreast of technical innovations which he could possibly implement in his productions. However, many of his aesthetic and conceptual ideas reached beyond off-the-shelf technology. Haskell Wexler, ASC told Kubrick that Ed DiGiulio, president of Cinema Products Corporation in Los Angeles, was responsive to the demanding requirements of filmmakers, prompting the director to call DiGiulio about his technical needs for *Clockwork*. After their discussion, DiGiulio purchased a standard Mitchell BNC for Kubrick, which Cinema Products overhauled. DiGiulio also supplied a joystick control for smooth operation of zoom lenses, and a BNC crystal motor. Interestingly, the BNC was not modified for reflex viewing, allowing Kubrick tremendous flexibility in the use of special lenses.

For this film, Kubrick envisioned shots that would utilize extremely long, continuous zooms. "Stanley started chatting with me

about getting a 20:1 zoom lens, and I said, 'We could do it,'" DiGiulio has reported. He explained to Kubrick that his company could take an Angenieux 16mm 20:1 zoom and put a 2x extender behind it so that it would cover the 35mm format. However, there would be a loss of two stops of light. "The next day I get a telex that's a yard long in which he explains to me that the 35mm format he's shooting in is 1.66:1," DiGiulio remembered. "Then he recites Pythagorean theorem to show me how X squared plus Y squared equals the diagonal root of the sum of the squares — and to point out that [in] going up from a 16mm format, I didn't need a 2x extender, that I could do it with a 1.61x. Therefore, I didn't have to lose two stops — maybe a stop or stop and a half. Here he is lecturing me, and I'm saying, 'Why this smart ass, another one of these wild-ass directors.' I called my old buddy Bern Levy, who was working for Angenieux at the time, and I said, 'Bern, I've got this wacko director who wants to do this.' Bern said, 'Well, you know, Ed, as a matter of fact we do have a 1.6x extender.' And I said, 'Oh, shit.' This extender existed for some other application, but the bottom line is that I was able to take a 16mm zoom lens, put this extender on it, and give Stanley the exact lens he wanted."

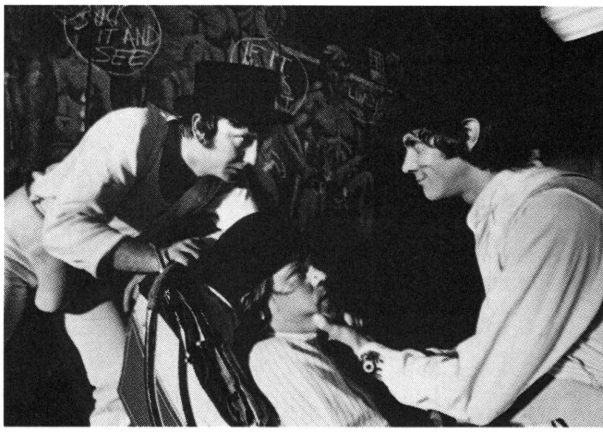
One outstanding use of this lens system is *Clockwork*'s signature opening shot, which begins as a tight close-up on Alex's sneering face and then slowly zooms out as the camera dollies back, revealing his trio of thuggish companions and the bizarre interior of their favorite haunt, the Korova Milkbar. "That shot is one of the great opening sequences," actor Malcolm McDowell told *Neon* magazine. "Of course, it's because of Stanley's technical ability. He saw it the next day and came in all excited. He said, 'You raised your glass, didn't you? To the audience?' I said, 'Yes, to the camera.' He didn't notice it during filming. But what an opening."

Not incidentally, Kubrick chose to shoot *Clockwork* with a 1.66:1 aspect ratio partially due to his disgust over the treatment that *2001* suffered in theaters. Improper projection had often all but ruined his precise Super Panavision 70 compositions, compelling him to finally switch to a relatively fail-safe, near-Academy frame. None of the filmmaker's subsequent films were wider than 1.85:1.

A Clockwork Orange was shot on location for $2 million during the winter of 1970-71. Kubrick's home, then outside London in Abbot's Mead, was the command center for the production. The property included editing rooms and a music facility which had a carefully catalogued record collection. The director had screening facilities in his living room, and a garage that served as his office. "Kubrick said, 'I want to make the movie within an hour and a half's travel time of my house, so figure out how far I can reach in that time in the rush hour,'" line producer Bernie Williams told *Neon* magazine. "We sent an army of production assistants to go out and shoot stills and do homework on locations. We bought 20 VW minivans, and made them into mobile offices and prop trucks so we could get around more quickly."

Kubrick wanted to create his near-future world by utilizing the modern architecture of contemporary England. He and production designer John Barry spent weeks going through architectural magazines in search of suitable shooting sites, storing selected pictures in a German-made Definitiv display file, which allowed them to cross-reference the material in limitless ways.

The neighborhood block that was home to Alex's flat was shot in Thamesmead at Wandsworth, an architecturally bold project in London. The auditorium used to display Alex's cure during a press conference was a library in South Norwood. The writer's house was shot at two separate locations: the exterior was a house at Oxfordshire, and the interior a home in Radlett. The recently built Brunel (later West London) University was used for the Ludovico medical facility. The deserted theater where a woman is raped and Alex and his "droogs" battle another gang was filmed on the derelict stage of the old casino at Tagg's Island.

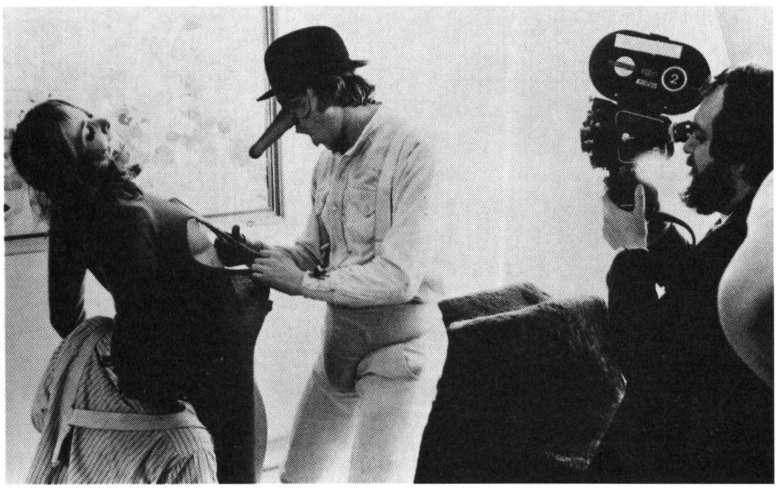


Georgie (James Marcus) and Dim (Warren Clarke) inform their leader that they wish to do business in a "new way." A seemingly agreeable Alex will soon quash the notion.

New lens technology made it easier to shoot on location while maintaining Kubrick's strict technical standards. The record boutique sequence, filmed at the American Drug Store in King's Road, Chelsea, was shot with an Angenieux 9.8mm lens, which allowed a 90-degree viewing angle. The f.95 lens made it possible to shoot in a room with natural light until late in the afternoon with 200 percent less light than the earlier standard f2.0 lenses required.

The only sets built for the film were the aforementioned Korova Milkbar, the prison admission area, and the writer's home's bathroom and entrance hall (other interiors there were shot at a futuristic property known as Skybreak in Warren Radlett, Hertfordshire). These sets were created in a warehouse just minutes from Borehamwood, and were designed solely because they couldn't be found on location.

The Old Ultra-Violence



Kubrick uses an Arri 2C to capture the film's most infamous sequence, in which the droogs cripple a writer and rape his wife as a gleeful Alex serenades the couple with "Singin' in the Rain."

To create the Korova's ambience of sublime debauchery, Kubrick hired sculptor Liz Moore (who had built the Star Child for *2001*) to create a series of tables and milk dispensers in the form of provocatively posed nude women. Kubrick's plan was inspired by a gallery exhibition he'd attended which had featured furniture composed of life-sized fiberglass female figures. (To aid Moore, he directed John Barry to photograph a nude model in every position he thought might make for a suitable table.) "There are fewer positions than you might think," Kubrick commented with his typically dry wit.

Other, equally suggestive paintings and sculptures were gathered from various artists to help set the tone for Alex's world of sex and violence (some of these are prominently displayed in his bedroom and at the "health farm" where he commits his murder). To add some contrast in the writer's home, Kubrick selected "Seedboxes," a sunny picture painted by his wife, Christiane, depicting flowers drenched in ochre light.

Since Kubrick's early days as a still photographer, he had centered his compositions. Centered and counterbalanced images are pleasing to the eye and respect the frame that embraces them. A centered image represents order, control, discipline, logic and organization — the very qualities inherent in Kubrick's personality. Shot by shot, *Clockwork* generally maintains these austere principles, yet the filmmaker recognized that telling Alex's tale also required the use of more avant-garde camera techniques. "Telling a story realistically is such a slowpoke and ponderous way to proceed, and it doesn't fulfill the psychic needs that people have," the director told Paul D. Zimmerman of *Newsweek*. "We sense that there's more to life and to the universe than realism can possibly deal with."

Kubrick told Joseph Gelmis of *Newsday*, "I wanted to find a way to stylize all of this violence, and also to make it as balletic as possible." Toward this end, the director over- and undercranked the camera to cinematically interpret the film's graphic images of brutality, transforming the acts into something beyond mere explicitness. "The attempted rape on stage has the overtones of a ballet," Kubrick commented. "The speeded-up orgy sequence is a joke. That scene took about 28 minutes to shoot at two frames a second. It lasts on screen about 40 seconds. Alex's fight with his droogs would have lasted about 14 seconds if it wasn't in slow motion. I wanted to slow it to a lovely floating movement."

Perhaps the most subtle yet extreme cinematic departure from reality in *Clockwork* is the scene in which Alex and his cohorts take a midnight joyride along a country lane in a stolen "Durango 95" sports car, playing "hogs of the road" with other travelers of the night. The master shot is a head-on angle of the car, with the three passengers hanging on tight as Alex tests his nerve at the wheel. The sequence was photographed on a process stage, with the passing scenery in the nighttime background plate glowing in ghostly fashion. The high-contrast rear-projection footage is overly bright and nearly monochromatic, recalling a similar effect created for F.W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* in scenes featuring the vampire's black carriage eerily racing through the night. Intercut shots representing Alex's POV of the road were slightly undercranked and ostensibly lit by the car's headlights. A master at the use of projection effects, Kubrick probably employed the exaggerated background plate to convey the euphoria of his drug-addled characters.

To depict Alex's perverse fantasies, Kubrick turned to movie history in order to illustrate the character's dream state as he listens to his beloved Beethoven — perhaps suggesting that Alex's stunted imagination is only capable of regurgitating prefabricated images. Some of the "dream" shots were composed of stock footage, while the filmmaker also relied on re-creations of moments from other motion pictures. "The book describes things stylistically that I couldn't film," Kubrick told Joseph Gelmis. "I just wanted to have him visualizing some very inappropriate images one might think of while listening to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Violent images. The cavemen sequence came from *One Million Years B.C.*, the film with Raquel Welch. [Alex] would imagine things he had seen in films." A low-angle shot of a woman in a white dress

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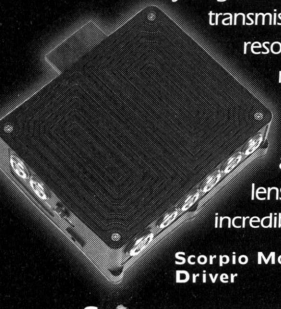
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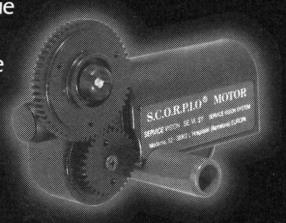
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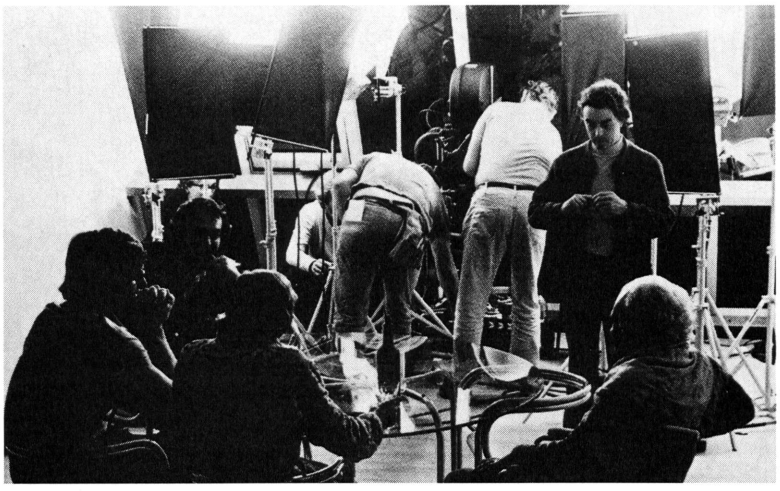
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The Old Ultra-Violence



"Try the wine." Kubrick (seated) and lighting cameraman John Alcott, BSC (standing) prepare with actors David Prowse, Malcolm McDowell and Patrick Magee (backs to camera, left to right).

falling through the trap door of a hangman's platform — displaying both her undergarments and the sudden jerk of the noose snapping her neck — was based on a shot seen in the black-comedy Western *Cat Ballou*, which Kubrick elaborately restaged. The image lasts less than one second, yet adroitly epitomizes Alex's crude sexual aggression toward women.

Partially for the sake of production speed and economy, Kubrick and Alcott primarily relied on practical lamps to light the film. Both the Korova Milkbar and the health farm feature clusters of bare Photoflood bulbs built into futuristic fixtures, while other scenes — such as those set in the prison — feature single bulbs strung simply from the ceiling, or exposed fluorescent tubes glowing brightly. Color temperatures often clash.

To supplement this illumination, Alcott often used very lightweight Lowel 1,000-watt quartz lights bounced off the ceiling or reflective umbrellas. This approach allowed Kubrick to shoot 360-degree pans without concern for hiding cumbersome studio lamps, though larger sources were required for many scenes, such as when Alex and his gang assault an old drunk in a harshly lit underground alley. "I find that the Lowel light has a far greater range of illumination from flood to spot than any other light I know of," Alcott would later note. "In fact, it's the only light of its kind that gives you a fantastic spot, if you need it, and an absolute overall flood. Also, when you put a flag over most quartz lights you get a double shadow — but not with the Lowels. But then, of course, they were designed by a cameraman."

The *Clockwork* production was originally slated to shoot for 10 weeks, but ultimately took close to a year. Kubrick's usual high shooting ratio and meticulous methods contributed to the lengthy production schedule. The director demanded 30 takes for the shot in which Alex unexpectedly whacks Dim (Warren Clarke) with a heavy walking stick while they lounge at the Korova. During the shooting of the scene in which Alex bludgeons the Cat Lady (Miriam Karlin) to death with a large penis sculpture, the technical crew was crouched down outside the room while the director personally filmed McDowell and Karlin with his handheld Arri 2C. Writer Alexander Walker was an observer and participant in the event. "Kubrick had decided to shoot the fight to the death in 360 degrees with a handheld camera; the Steadicam hadn't been invented at that point," Walker told *Neon* magazine. "Kubrick held onto the camera, the man with the power-pack held onto Kubrick [from behind], and I held onto the man with the power-pack. We were whirling around and it was very difficult to control [our] momentum; we'd end up in a heap on the floor, or I'd be swung around and end up in shot."

Seven months into production, Kubrick began to reshoot or match shots that had been completed earlier. "Once I had to match a laugh [I'd done] eight months before, and I couldn't do it," actor Warren Clarke told *Neon* magazine. "I was standing on a rostrum and the camera was below, looking up, so Stanley was tickling my legs, giving me whiskey, a funny cigarette to smoke… He tried everything, and I just couldn't match it. I thought I'd really let the man down and felt despondent, but he was really cool about it — which was unusual, because generally if someone didn't do something right, he'd fire them."

Perhaps the most audacious scene in *Clockwork* is the ruthless attack on the writer (Patrick Magee) and the rape of his wife (Adrienne Corri) by Alex and his gang. Little was accomplished during the first two days of shooting, but on the third day, Kubrick blocked out a portion of the action with McDowell, instructing him to knock Magee to the floor and begin kicking his guts out. The director then suddenly asked McDowell, "Can you sing?" It was suggested that the actor could improvise a song-and-dance number while administering the savage beating. McDowell confessed that "Singin' in the Rain" was the only tune he knew by heart. This resulted in what Kubrick calls the CRM, or "critical rehearsal moment," during which the director and actors come together to create a defining scene. Kubrick immediately looked into obtaining the rights to the song, and discovered that the fee was $10,000 to use it for 30 seconds. Once the rights were in hand, shoot-

ing proceeded immediately. Kubrick later invited Stanley Donen, the director of the musical classic, to view his scene and then asked Donen's personal permission to use the song for the sequence. "He wanted to make sure I wasn't offended," Donen reports in the biography *Dancing on the Ceiling*. "Why would I be? It didn't affect the movie *Singin' in the Rain*." Gene Kelly, who had performed the famous number in the 1952 film, felt otherwise. When Kelly and Kubrick met at an awards ceremony following *Clockwork*'s release, the dance-man refused to talk to the director.

Kubrick cut *A Clockwork Orange* at his estate with editor Bill Butler. They worked with two Steenbecks so the director could continuously screen film for selection. He relied on a Moviola for the actual cutting. At first they put in 10 hours a day, seven days a week; then, as deadlines approached, they expanded to 14 to 16 hours a day.

Music was a crucial element at the center of Burgess's story, exemplified by Alex's supreme love for the works of Beethoven. Kubrick wanted classical music throughout the film to provide point and counterpoint with the story. In order to bring a futuristic quality to 18th-century motifs, Kubrick looked to electronics. After hearing *Switched-on Bach*, a record of synthesizer performances released in 1968, Kubrick hired Walter (later known as "Wendy") Carlos to compose and realize the *Clockwork* score, which included pieces by Purcell, Rossini, Elgar and Beethoven. The music was recorded in stereo, but Kubrick disliked stereo recording for film; the soundtrack was therefore re-recorded in mono. *A Clockwork Orange* became the first feature to use Dolby noise reduction on all aspects of the mixing process.

After showing the first print of the titles at the National Screenings Laboratory, Kubrick criticized a hairline shadow on one of





The Old Ultra-Violence

the backgrounds and gave a list of instructions. A week before the premiere, the master negative was scratched and the color quality was not to Kubrick's specification, so he decided to switch labs. The filmmaker personally drove the 16 reels of cut O-negative to the new facility in his tank-like Land Rover, and had editor Bill Butler drive a separate car a short distance ahead of his vehicle in order to absorb any impact in the event of a possible traffic accident.

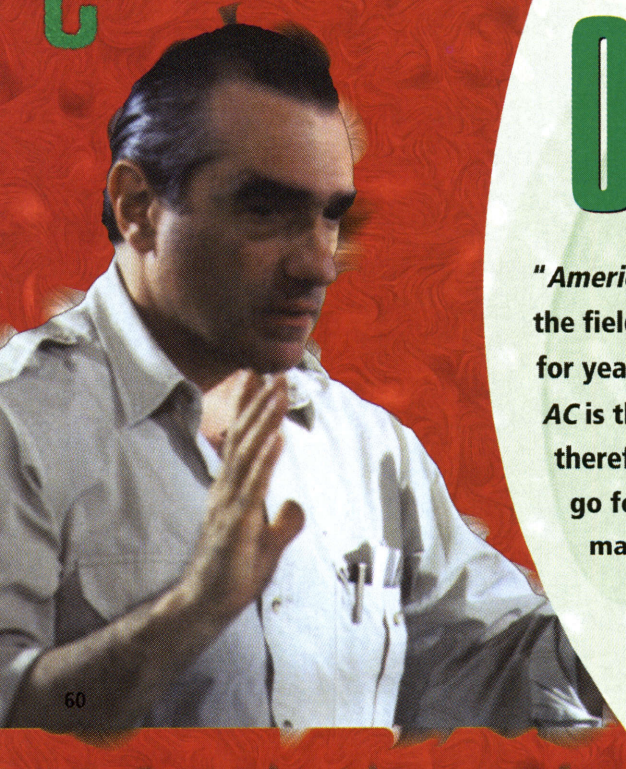
After review by the Motion Picture Association of America, *A Clockwork Orange* received the dreaded "X" rating. Dr. Aaron Stern of the MPAA was especially concerned with passing the high-speed menage-a-trois scene, arguing, "If we did that, any hardcore pornographer could speed up his scenes and legitimately ask for an R on the same basis." The picture was released in the U.S. in December of 1971 to strong critical and public response. However, in October of 1972, Kubrick, who had final-cut approval, withdrew the picture from theaters for 60 days to replace 30 seconds of explicit sexual material from two scenes with less-objectionable alternate footage. The MPAA gave the new version of the film an R rating and the picture was re-released at the end of the year.

A Clockwork Orange was nominated for Best Picture by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, while Kubrick was nominated for Best Director and Best Adapted Screenplay. Bill Butler was nominated for his editing. While it did not earn any Oscars, the film did receive the New York Film Critics' prize for Best Film of the Year, with Kubrick winning for Best Director.

In 1974, after several copycat crimes were attributed to *A Clockwork Orange,* Kubrick pulled his film from distribution in England, making it illegal to show it anywhere in the country. The self-imposed ban still holds a quarter-century later.

Tragically, John Alcott died of heart failure at the age of 55 in August of 1986 while vacationing with his family in the south of France. Although Kubrick continued to control every aspect of the cinematography on his films, Alcott made an enduring and distinctive contribution to *A Clockwork Orange,* as well as Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon* (for which he earned an Academy Award for Best Cinematography — see *AC* Mar. '76), and *The Shining* (*AC* Aug. '80). The use of light in these films is intrinsically linked to Alcott, marking just one of the many contributions he brought to his work with Kubrick. The cinematographer's later films included *Fort Apache the Bronx, Under Fire,*

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Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes, and *No Way Out.* Despite his brief career, Alcott left us the legacy of a constant search for technical and aesthetic excellence, a keen parallel to Kubrick's own pursuit of these virtues. ■

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Vincent LoBrutto is the author of Stanley Kubrick: A Biography. *Additional material was provided for this article by David E. Williams.*

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Mob Psychology

Cinematographer Phil Abraham aims for both drama and humor on *The Sopranos*, HBO's popular and critically acclaimed gangster series.

by Eric Rudolph

Unit photography by Anthony Neste

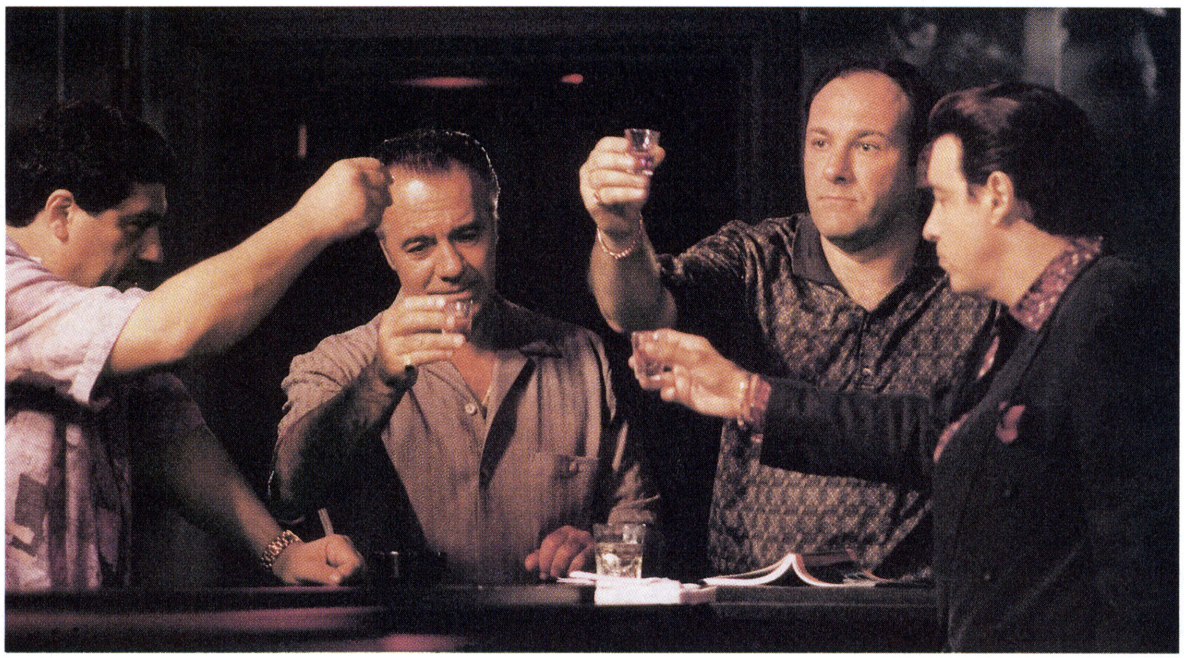
The HBO series *The Sopranos* has caused a sensation like few other television shows in recent memory. Creator David Chase's dark, realistic, yet subtly comic view of organized crime at the century's end debuted in January of this year with a moderate amount of fanfare and expectations. By mid-season, however, the show had become a ratings smash. Even the most hardened critics were ecstatic in their praise. The venerable *New York Times* raved that *The Sopranos* may be the "greatest creation of American popular culture of the last quarter-century."

The Sopranos swept this year's Emmy announcements with 16 nominations, and is the first pay-cable series to be nominated as Best Dramatic Series. The second 13-episode season of *The Sopranos* will begin airing in January of 2000.

A family drama set in a modern mob milieu, *The Sopranos* centers on Tony Soprano (James Gandolfini), a hulking middle-aged husband and father who just happens to be a high-ranking mobster in northern New Jersey. Soprano desperately wants to be a nice guy when he's off the clock, but this inner yearning conflicts with his professional life as a murderous earner.

On the home front, Soprano is pressured from all sides by the members of his dysfunctional family, who include his angry and spiritually hungry wife, Carmella (Edie Falco); his accomplished but unpredictable teen daughter, Meadow (Jamie Lynn

Photos courtesy of HBO.



Opposite: Paulie Walnuts (Tony Sirico) and the sharp-dressing Silvio Dante (Steven Van Zandt) discuss "family business" over dinner. To create a realistic feeling, Sakharov lit the scene to approximate the warm look and low light level that candles would create. This page: Big Pussy Bomp (Vincent Pastore), Paulie Walnuts, Tony Soprano (James Gandolfini) and Silvio Dante toast the memory of their recently deceased crime boss at Bada Bing!, Dante's topless bar.

Sigler); and his beloved but tenacious Uncle Junior (Dominic Chianese), the crime family's de facto boss, who, encouraged in no uncertain terms by Soprano's scheming and vengeful mother, Livia (Nancy Marchand), tried to have Tony killed toward the end of the first season.

This constant emotional onslaught has caused Soprano to suffer repeated collapses with no apparent physical cause. In an attempt to regain his equilibrium, he has sought the counsel of an attractive Italian psychiatrist, Jennifer Melfi (Lorraine Bracco), who immediately prescribes Prozac. The doctor and her patient battle and flirt, and the closer she gets to helping him unearth the true cause of his problems, the more explosive their relationship becomes.

Liberated by the freedom of pay-cable, *The Sopranos* melds a moody, realistic photographic style, audacious writing, insightful casting and bravura acting to tremendous effect. There isn't a weak performer in the cast, which is led by Gandolfini (whom *New York* magazine's John Leonard described as "a marvel of baffled machismo") and Falco.

The actors who portray the Soprano crime crew are equally compelling. Michael Imperioli, who played the memorable role of Spider in Martin Scorsese's mob masterpiece *GoodFellas,* strikes all the right notes as Christopher, Tony's young but ambitious lieutenant. Longtime Bruce Springsteen collaborator and first-time actor Steven Van Zandt is perfectly cast as tough topless bar owner Silvio Dante, a flashy dresser who possesses a penchant for arson and murder. Colorful Mafia movie regular Tony Sirico also makes an impact in the small part of the loyal low-level soldier Paulie Walnuts.

The show's tremendous success in its first season has resulted in a larger production budget that will allow about half of the next 13 episodes to be produced on a nine-day schedule instead of eight (*The Sopranos* normally shoots six to nine pages per day). The extra cash has also led to the addition of new family members, such as Tony Soprano's formerly estranged sister, Janice (Aïda Turturro), a New Age disciple. The increased budget will even allow the show's creators to film one of this season's episodes in Italy.

Chase (executive producer of *I'll Fly Away* and the final two seasons of *Northern Exposure*) acknowledges his fascination with the contemporary mob world. Since he feels that the milieu is influenced as much by *GoodFellas* and *The Godfather* films as it is by old Italian traditions, *The Sopranos* is packed with mob-movie and even cinematography references. In one episode, for example, a group of mobsters argue over the correct way to effect a "message" killing; some insist that the classic approach is a bullet in the eye, *a la* Vegas hotshot Moe Green, who is shot through his thick black glasses in *The Godfather*. Other enforcers disagree, maintaining that the message kill traditionally requires a shot in the mouth. Paulie Walnuts finally resolves the argument by agreeing that the mouth shot is correct, while noting that the bullet through Moe Green's glasses in *The Godfather* "was just the way Francis framed it, for the [cinematic] shot value."

In the show's very first episode, there was even a direct dialogue reference to Gordon Willis, ASC, who photographed all three *Godfather* films. Although first-season director of photography Alik Sakharov and creator Chase were also inspired by the work of other

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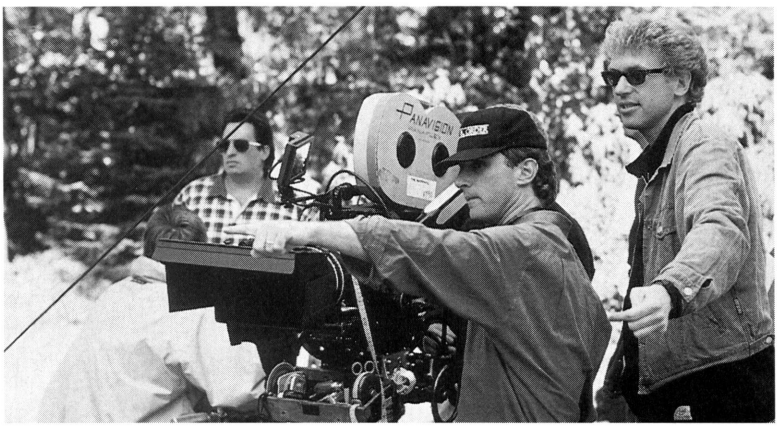
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Director Matthew Penn makes a point while framing a scene with cinematographer Phil Abraham.

great cinematographers, such as Vittorio Storaro, ASC, AIC, they used Willis's *Godfather* work as their main reference point. The result was a visual style that was both realistic and highly dramatic (see Points East, *AC* Oct. '98).

For the coming season, the cinematographer's duties have been assumed by Phil Abraham, who served as Sakharov's camera operator, as well as director of photography on six of the first season's shows. The cameraman, whose credits include the independent features *Trouble on the Corner* and *Cherry,* plans to refine the realistic, non-glamorous look that he helped Sakharov implement.

Sakharov himself says that he strove to use the type of lighting found in real life as his starting point, explaining, "The idea was to re-create or enhance the lighting one would find in life, so it would work onscreen both technically and dramatically."

As an example of this approach, Sakharov cites a scene in which several mobsters gathered for a nighttime meeting in the back room of a pork store. "When the actors came through the back entrance, we had a single bare light-bulb hanging from the ceiling. As each actor passed in front of that light, we'd see a silhouette that would provide just enough information to tell the audience which character they were looking at. The actors would then walk into the actual back room, which was lit by ceiling fixtures; we therefore illuminated the set from an overhead box that was parallel to the floor. That approach gave the actors deep eye sockets, and we just went with it because it suggested the reality of the surroundings. We deliberately went for such familiar visual cues, to emphasize the sense of reality."

One of the most unusual aspects of the show's cinematography — which is consistent with Sakharov's goal of realism, and also a key to making many of the days — is the permanent illumination in place around the kitchen and family room of the Sopranos' suburban subdivision mansion. The kitchen set is ringed at ceiling level by long wooden troughs that hold bat-strips, simple 4' wooden strips fitted with 16 closely-spaced 100-watt frosted household bulbs. The bat-strips themselves are connected to a dimmer to allow the easy adjustment of fill levels. The idea behind this strategy was to facilitate quick setups and create realistic, household-style light that would echo Gordon Willis's *Godfather* cinematography. Abraham notes, "We keep it warm, especially in the family setting; the household bulbs come in at 2800° or 2900° Kelvin. Although the look is warm,

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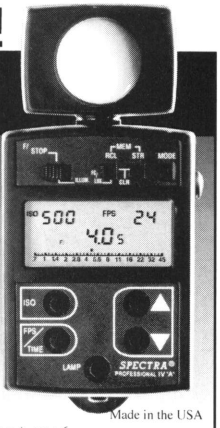
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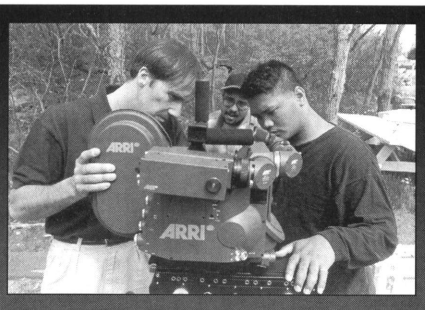
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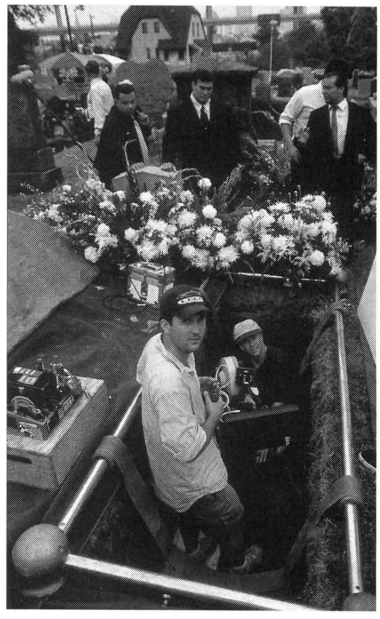
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Crew members set up a "grave's-eye view" shot for a funeral sequence.

it's not really deviant [when used in conjunction with 3200°K tungsten-balanced film]."

Lighting the many scenes that take place in the kitchen is therefore a matter of dimming and then modeling the bat-strips with flags, reflectors and teasers. Abraham additionally employs a handful of harder 3200°K back and rim sources, which are also dimmed frequently to warm their color. For this season's work, three 2K Baby Juniors are also permanently hung around the ceiling's perimeter. These units are set on a pipe and can therefore be moved easily to help separate the actors from the background, no matter how a scene is blocked. "I've got GAM boxes on the Baby Juniors so I can vary the throw," Abraham explains. "But even with the diffusion, they give a nice hard edge in contrast to the soft, shadowless lighting from the bat-strips."

For the sake of the highlights, the warm light from the bat-strips (which work together like one big soft source, thanks to the tight spacing of the household bulbs) has been slightly cooled down with gels since the middle of the first season. Abraham explains, "I have ¼ blue

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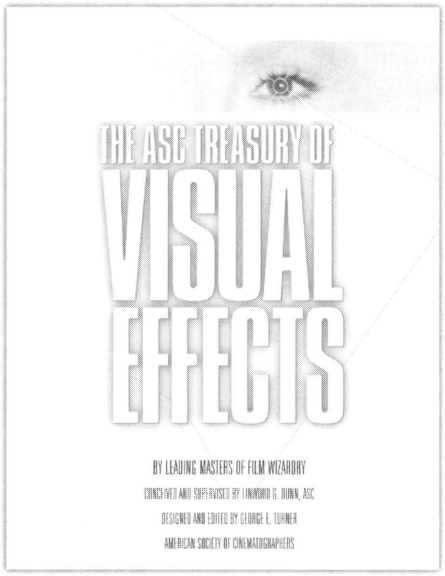
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gels and opal diffusion built into the bat-strip troughs, because Alik found that when you're working at too low a light level, the bulbs reach a certain curve where you can't get a real white anymore."

To help control spill, egg-crates were added to all of the bat-strip troughs last year at mid-season, and Abraham has also installed six large Duvateen teasers on pulley rigs in the kitchen. He explains, "I can bring the teasers right down to the tops of the actors' heads if I want. We also painted the walls slightly darker this year in order to keep the spill under better control."

The master bedroom set also has permanent bat-strips. The Sopranos' dining room, foyer and formal living room are permanently lit with Chinese lanterns fitted with tungsten-balanced Photofloods and shrouded with Duvateen skirts. The balanced floods are dimmed to warm up their output.

The show's built-in broad, soft sources do not mean that the lighting is always even, however. "You can't make things too dark with the strip lights in the Soprano kitchen, but it doesn't always have to be bright kitchen light either," says Abraham. "In the first show of the second season, there are some moody scenes set in the kitchen. There's a bittersweet moment at the end of the first show, and I thought it might be nice to introduce a bit of the harder, moodier look. I used hard light coming in through the windows with a low fill level from the bat-strips."

Another advantage of the bat-strips and the Chinese lanterns is that the stage floor can be kept free of light stands. This allows for greater flexibility in blocking and camera movement, and also help the cinematographer with the protection needed for the show's 1.78:1 HDTV framing. With some frustration, Abraham relates, "I was hoping to convince HBO to show *The Sopranos* in a letterboxed 1.78:1

format this year, and to compose solely for that format, rather than for both 1.33:1 and widescreen. Unfortunately, their viewer surveys consistently proved the public doesn't understand that they're getting more, not less, with letterboxing. As long as we're going to the trouble of keeping lights out of the wider frame, which can be a bit of a hardship, I thought the audience should be able to see the whole image."

Abraham also uses the bat-strip lights on location as needed, though not as often as Sakharov did. "It's not usually a matter of formal style," he says. "On location, the use of the strip lights is dictated more by time and space restrictions. If I'm in a location with a low ceiling and I'm shooting two people against a wall, I can hang a bat-strip on the opposite wall coming back at them, with a shelf or teaser to keep light off the wall behind them. The strips are a handy light for that situation — as are Chinese lanterns, which I'd be just as likely to use. If I had more room and time, I might use more conventional lighting instruments."

Abraham does note, however, that the strip lights and lanterns both have a characteristic that makes them ideally suited for the moodier approach he takes to the realistic Mafia-milieu locations, with their inherent air of menace. "Both the strips and the lanterns give us a glorious three-quarter wrap of light that falls to zero in the shadow area," he says. "I think that falloff is inherent in a household-style bulb, as opposed to a tungsten filament in a movie-lamp housing."

Although these offbeat instruments can provide rich shadows, Abraham has slightly modified the show's signature use of deep shadows on faces and backgrounds. "We still use very low amounts of fill for facial shadows, but most of the time I'm using just a touch more fill than Alik did. I'll often put a silver beadboard at a three-quarter angle to skip a little

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reflection into the dark side. Of course, sometimes I'll just let it go completely inky-dark."

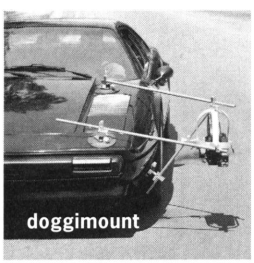
While he doesn't generally go quite as dark as Sakharov, Abraham makes enthusiastic use of dark mood lighting whenever it's appropriate. "For the second season's first show, we did a long montage sequence with lyrical shots and deep shadows," he reveals. "We have a wonderful shot of Tony Soprano coming into his house late at night and sneaking into the basement. We start on a still frame of the dining room looking up to the main staircase, and then Jim [Gandolfini] comes into frame in half silhouette and moves into a little front light. We follow him as he opens the basement door, and suddenly a broad swath of warm light hits him from below. It's a really beautiful sequence."

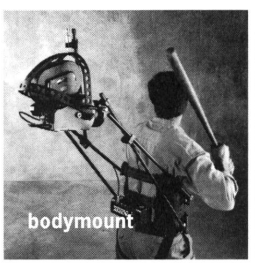
During the initial discussions that resulted in the show's dramatic but realistic visual style, Sakharov had to talk David Chase out of adopting a more mobile camera style. "The scripts deal with the psychological worlds of the characters, so I thought we should go for a mature look, not a restlessness," Sakharov says. "It seemed right to give the audience the time to see the world we were presenting. That was especially important for the scenes in the psychiatrist's office, where we used no unmotivated camera movement. I think that type of approach helps the actors claim the attention of the viewers."

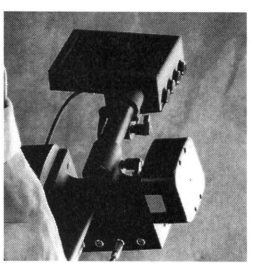
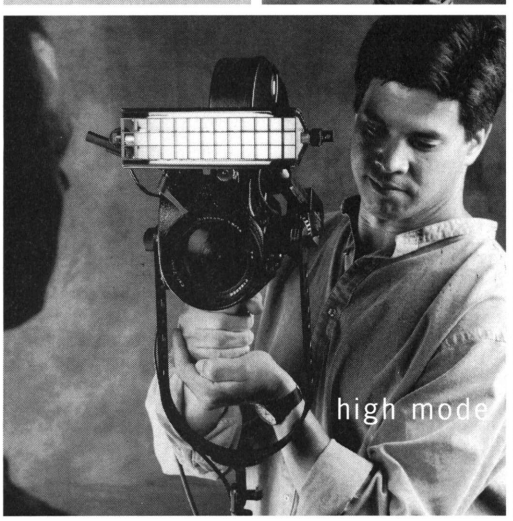
This season, Abraham is using a bit more camera movement, although he's opted to keep the camera still for Tony Soprano's sessions with his shrink. "We're a bit more likely to move the camera to reflect what is going on with the characters, even if they're standing still," he notes, adding that the subtle, conservative approach is a far cry from the frenetic camera movement often seen on television these days.

Abraham instituted another subtle change for season two's day exteriors. Sakharov always used a #1 or #2 tobacco filter together with an 85 (and a polarizer where appropriate). "The tobacco filters are a way to tie the exteriors to the interiors by making them a bit warmer," Abraham notes. "However, I found that in haze, the tobacco filter reacted with the lower levels of fill and went too yellow. For that reason, I'm not using the 85, but instead letting the tobacco filter do my color correction [from tungsten to daylight balance]. It's a happier medium. Whenever possible, I combine the tobacco filter with a polarizer, which adds a rich, contrasty, feature-look quality."

During the show's first season, the tight schedule resulted in an unorthodox yet consistent approach





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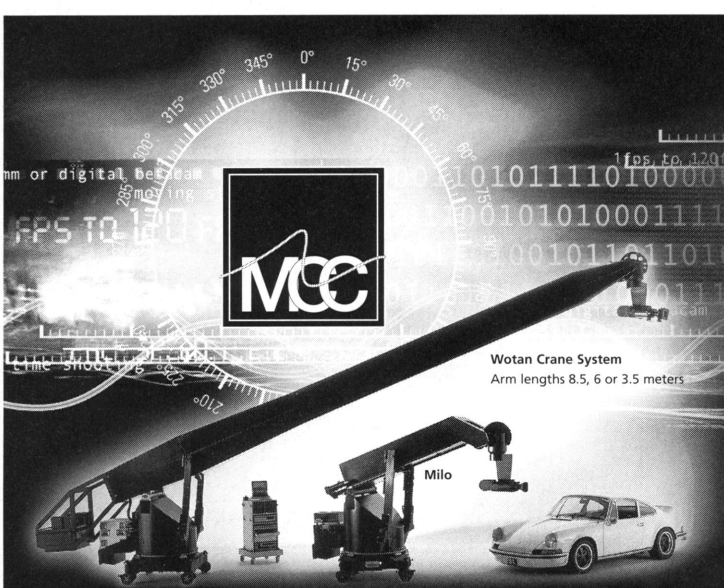
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to a key location that deviates from the generally realistic look. The exteriors in front of the North Jersey pork store, where the mobsters gather at sidewalk tables to discuss business over espresso, had to be shot when the sun was blasting the building's facade. "The blazing sun, the added contrast and saturation from the polarizer, and the use of wide-angle lenses created an almost otherworldly effect," Sakharov relates. The resulting ambience is the opposite of the moody, shadowy interior lighting that often wraps the characters, but Chase and Sakharov decided to incorporate the look into most of the sidewalk café scenes, creating an effective visual analogy for the simultaneously overt and covert aspects of the gangster's lives.

Shot in Super 35, the show's A-camera is a Platinum Panaflex; oddly enough, Panavision's latest model, the Millennium, serves as the B-camera. Abraham explains, "I tend to pull the stops on exteriors, but I do so by adjusting the shutter angle instead of the lens aperture, which allows me to maintain a consistent depth of field. With the Platinum, the way you adjust the shutter is like follow-focusing — you feel it. The Millennium is a great camera, but not for changing the shutter angle, because it's entirely digital. You can program the changes, but there's no way to make them on the fly."

The Sopranos carries a complete set of Panavision Primo prime lenses and two Primo zooms. The short 4:1 17.5-75mm T2.3 zoom and the 11:1 24-275mm T2.8. Thus far, Vision 500T 5279 has been utilized as the primary film stock for both exteriors and interiors, although Abraham has been experimenting with Vision 800T 5289. "The 800T is always on the truck," he says. "I've used it sparingly when I want to go to a really low light level, in those scenes where I'm hoping that whatever is bright in the frame is enough to give us some contrast. The stock has worked quite well in those situations."

Despite the show's predetermined visual signatures, tight scheduling and permanently pre-rigged lighting setups, Abraham finds that he is free to be creative on the *Sopranos* set. "My choices tend to be made on an intuitive level," he submits. "I don't have a specified, locked-in lighting plan for any particular place. I decide how to light by looking through the eyepiece. Cinematographers talk about having elaborate lighting plans, but I've found that despite all of their pre-planning, they're usually peering through the eyepiece and letting the look take shape as they're lighting." ■



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A Battle for the Barn



Director John Stephenson and cinematographer Mike Brewster team up on *Animal Farm*, a vivid adaptation of George Orwell's classic political allegory.

by Jean Oppenheimer

Unit photography by Johnathan Hession

Turner Network Television's production of *Animal Farm* looked daunting even on paper. With a cast featuring 100 real animals, 20 animatronic beasts, and the occasional human actor, the 14-week shoot would require the patience and instincts of a dedicated farmhand. "This film was an exercise in problem-solving," concedes cinematographer Mike Brewster with characteristic British understatement. "It was hell, actually," he says with a laugh a moment later.

The British-born Brewster, who now resides in France, began his career developing film at Rank (now Deluxe) Laboratories. Switching to production, he spent eight years as a clapper/loader, 14 as a focus puller (*Excalibur*, second unit on *The Empire Strikes Back*), and 10 as an operator (second unit on *Batman* and *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*, and first-unit operator on *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, *Hamburger Hill* and *Rambo III*). He jumped at the chance to make *Animal Farm*, fully aware of the challenges he would face.

The adaptation marks the feature debut of both Brewster and director John Stephenson, who runs the Jim Henson Creature Shop in London. The two men had worked together twice before while handling

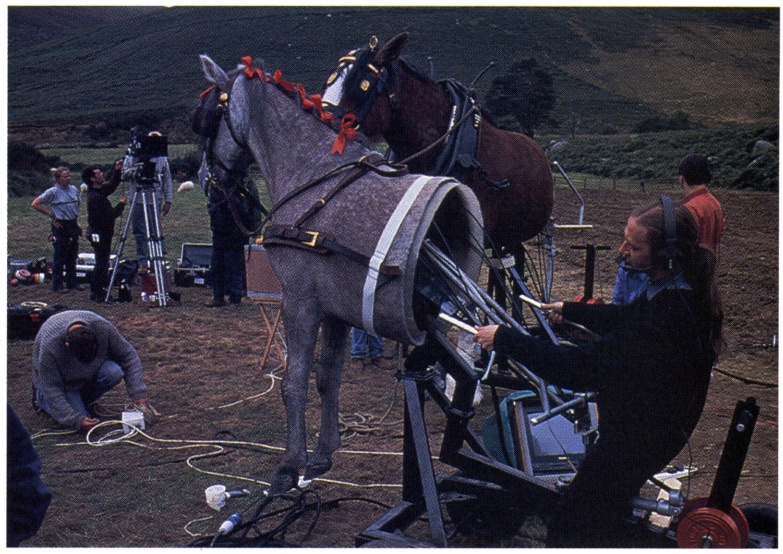
Photos courtesy of TNT and Cinesite.

lighting and directing, respectively, for the second-unit teams on *Pinocchio* and *Lost in Space*.

Published in 1945, George Orwell's classic political allegory *Animal Farm* is a stinging indictment of Stalinism in which the story's characters and plot mirror historical events that followed the 1917 Russian Revolution. After Farmer Jones (played by Pete Postlethwaite, representing pre-Revolutionary czar Nicholas II) is deposed by his downtrodden barnyard animals, the pigs, led by the ruthless hog Napoleon (the fable's Joseph Stalin), assume leadership positions. Corrupted by power, Napoleon turns on anyone he perceives to be a threat, most notably the idealistic pig Snowball (or Leon Trotsky). A new tyranny soon replaces the old, and the menagerie (proletariat Russia) is once again subjugated.

Director Stephenson followed his source material fairly closely, save for the addition of a narrating dog named Jessie and a new conclusion. When *Animal Farm* was written, the book lacked an ending since Communism was still a prevailing force. Given the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, real-life history provided the tale with a closing chapter of sorts.

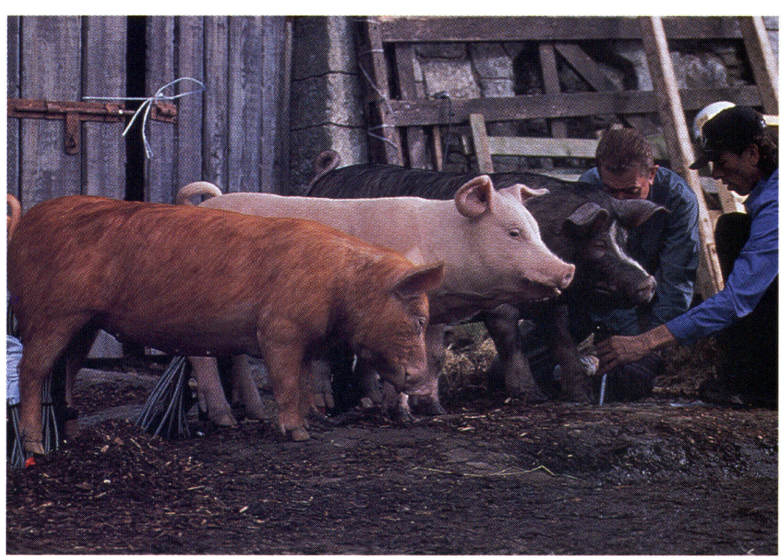
Although there was some thought to shooting the picture in Australia, Brewster campaigned hard for Ireland. He had spent five months there in 1981 while working on *Excalibur*, and remembered the extraordinary quality of the light, especially at certain times of year when the sun is low on the horizon. Furthermore, Ireland's dramatic seasonal changes — a warm, golden summer gives way to dank fall, and finally to bitterly cold winter — perfectly matched the story's emotional and visual progression. "We wanted to start off with everything golden and lush," Brewster explains. "After the animals take over the farm, there is this feeling of a new world. They think they are going to look after themselves and create a society where they won't be mistreated and everything will be wonderful. Of course, it's not like that — they become more and more abused [by their new oppressors], so we wanted the climate to look bleaker and bleaker."



Brewster and Stephenson wanted the visual changes to occur gradually so that the audience wouldn't be fully conscious of them, but would sense things becoming gloomier and more depressing. They mapped out four stages that would involve not only the use of certain filters, but also manipulation of the exposure and the development of the film stock.

Exteriors were shot on Kodak's daylight-balanced 250D 5297, while Vision 500T 5279 was used for interiors. Recounting his use of filters, Brewster details, "We started with a Tiffen ¼ straw, which is very warm. For the second stage, we switched to an antique suede. It has a lovely quality, and a slight green tinge that I felt worked well with Ireland's terrain. The next stage was to go natural, with no colored filter. For the final stage, I added a ¼ blue.

"As things got colder and bleaker in the third and fourth stages, we also wanted to give everything a



Opposite: The animals stand united after ousting their human oppressors. Such group shots were generally achieved by piecing together separate takes featuring different animal performers. This page: extensive animatronic work by the Henson Creature Shop aided the filmmakers in getting the desired performances, but compelled cameraman Mike Brewster to be creative with his camera angles to help hide the control wires and cables extending from the faux beasts.

A Battle for the Barn



Extensive compositing and shot-splitting allowed the filmmakers to create groups of animals within a single frame, a strategy that often required greenscreen work.

grittier look. I had to decide whether to do bleach-bypass on that part of the film or to force-develop it. I knew that Stanley Kubrick was doing something with force-developing on *Eyes Wide Shut* [see story on page 28 in this issue], so I decided to shoot some tests.

"I first shot some 250D, underexposing it one stop and force-developing it one stop to see what it would do to the blacks. I was very pleased: it enhanced the blacks, and I didn't lose any detail in them. It was an effect similar to what bleach-bypass does, but without draining the colors.

"I used that technique — underexposing one stop and pushing one stop — in the third stage. For the fourth stage, I tried underexposing two stops and forcing two stops, but if the light was at all flat — for instance, if there was no sun, or if the scene was front-lit — everything tended to go a little bit muddy. I found it much more successful if I only underexposed one stop and forced two stops."

Stephenson is pleased with the result. "The opening is beautiful and sunny, like *Witness*," he observes. "By the end, it looks cold and filthy — more like *Seven*."

Animal Farm was filmed on the Guinness Estate, nestled in the beautiful Lugalla Valley in County Wicklow, just south of Dublin. An entire studio had to be built to accommodate the production staff — administrative offices, roads in and out of the area, and a well to supply water. Even the electrical system had to be installed from scratch, in addition to the main setpieces of a barn, farmhouse, farm yard and paddock.

The barn was built on a platform raised four feet off the ground to allow for lighting units and the mechanisms needed to operate the animatronic animals, and because Stephenson wanted the barn to have an entry ramp that the animals could run down in certain scenes. "The interior of the barn was all wood and straw, so it had a naturally warm feeling," remarks Brewster. A daylight look was created with a ring of 18Ks positioned outside the windows and doors. For nighttime scenes, the barn's interior was lit with Photofloods mounted in the ceiling in three troughs on separate dimmers. Brewster added a ¼ CTB for night, a ¼ CTO for day, and some spun-glass diffusion to create gentle fill. "The interior of the barn was supposed to look broken-down and dirty," he continues. "If you have a bare bulb and put streaks and tips on it, it makes it look old. It also helps photographically because it takes the heat out of the bulb, and you have a bit more control over it."

The cameraman initially planned to create shafts of light coming through the floorboards using smoke and open-faced 1Ks and 2Ks positioned below the barn set, but the idea had to be scrapped because of wind. Almost every day brought howling gales. At one point, the barn had to be evacuated for fear it would collapse.

For night exteriors, Brewster used a Wendy light mounted on a cherrypicker as his moonlight source. "Lee Lighting first built the Wendy for cinematographer David Watkin [BSC]," explains Brewster. "It's like a Musco, except that instead of large bulbs, it has 140 very small heads tightly packed together, like a stadium light. It lights a large area but gives a single shadow. I put a ¼ blue over the whole thing.

"I normally like to crosslight and get a bit of backlight with my moonlight effect, but I couldn't do that because I couldn't move the cherrypicker [due to the constraints of the location]," he says. Additional illumination was provided by practicals scattered throughout the farmyard, and by light spilling out from the farmhouse windows.

The hostile location made hauling the lights around (to say nothing of the animatronic paraphernalia) extremely difficult. "We were working in mud for half the film," remarks Brewster. "The weather was usually dark, freezing cold and rainy. The whole crew was wonderful about it, though: the electricians, gaffer Tony Devlin, A-camera operator Seamus Corcoran, and focus puller Cairan Barry."

Due to the complexities of working with live and animatronic animals, the filmmakers shot with two cameras to ensure that good performances would not be lost due to photographic problems. The first-unit camera team consisted of Corcoran on A-camera, Brewster on B-camera, two focus pullers and two loaders. The equipment package included two Arriflex 535s, a 435, the



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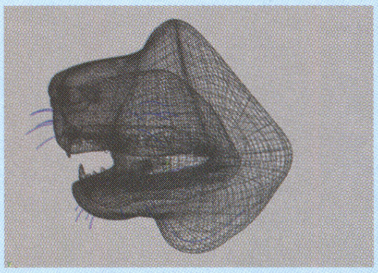
Cinesite's digital work brings livestock to life for *Animal Farm.*

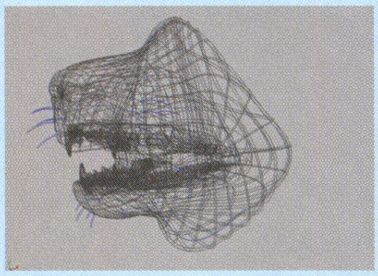
One scene in *Animal Farm* features Snowball the pig as he climbs six or seven rungs down a ladder, while Jessie the dog watches. A real porcine performer could handle a few rungs, but not six or seven, and the action was too complex for an animatronic stand-in. The solution was to create a digital pig that could intercut seamlessly with animatronic and real animals in the sequence.

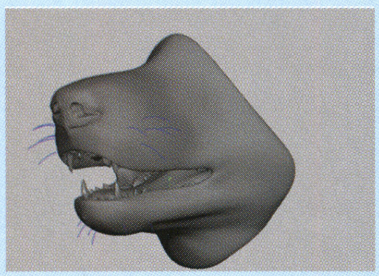
The hardest part of this task was matching the subtleties of the tones and textures in the pig's skin, says Sue Rowe, head of 2-D effects at Cinesite (Europe) Ltd., which created over 500 shots for the TNT production. Compounding the difficulty was the background plate containing a reflective, rain-soaked ground. Dimitri Bakalov animated the CG pig, while reflections were later added into the plate's muddy puddles.

Incidentally, Jessie was a real dog, and a low-tech trick was used to get her to look at the "missing" pig that would be added in post. "We had people hiding in the bushes attracting her attention, so her eyeline was in the right place," says Rowe. "What worked best was a white ball stuck to the end of a plunger."

"Some people think that these subtle details don't matter," says Cinesite digital effects producer Mike Pryor. "Sure, it's one shot that lasts a few seconds, but every shot is important. This isn't a typical visual effects film. It's an allegory that tells a story. The effects shots had to be photo-realistic and transparent."







Animal Farm has the unique distinction of playing both on television and in theatrical venues. "Director John Stephenson didn't want the characters to seem cartoonish," says visual effects supervisor Angus Bickerton. "He wanted a film-style aesthetic. We had to create effects on a TV budget that would hold up on cinema screens. We treated it like a movie. Everything was the same — the digital artists and animators, the software and the Silicon Graphics platforms. The main difference was resolution."

Pryor elaborates: "We scanned film at 2K and subsampled it down to 1K for most shots. That made manipulating the images more manageable, because it took less processing time and disk space. If an image looked a little soft, we plugged in the original 2K scans, but about 90 percent of the work was done at 1K. That meant we were handling and moving three megabytes per frame instead of 12."

For the theatrical version, a Kodak laser recorder will be used to convert 2K images onto the same color intermediate film that the lab uses for mastering release prints.

Animal Farm marks the first major venture for Cinesite into character animation. The job consisted mainly of creating digital snouts that were tracked onto real animals, whose movements were synchronized with dialogue.

Originally, some of the smaller animals were slated to be done with animatronics, but Stephenson preferred hybrid creatures — real animals with digital snouts. Cinesite assigned teams of animators to work on specific animals. For research, Pryor sent the animators to a zoo, where they drew sketches and documented the creatures on video. They also took cues from such recent films as *Dr. Doolittle* and *Babe: Pig in the City.* "The animators who worked on Jessie understood that dogs have hard lower jaw bones, so they can't articulate with their lower lips," Pryor says. "We animated Jessie in Maya and used Elastic Reality software to do additional warping that would accentuate her mouth. The images were exported to 2-D workstations for compositing, where the artists usually did a bit of additional warping around the brows and eyes."

Cinesite also produced other effects shots, including miniatures, blue- and greenscreen traveling mattes, and many composites, including split-screen shots involving multiple animals for group shots.

While the technology used on *Animal Farm* is impressive, Bickerton notes the importance of the talented artists using it. "Jessie was a real dog, so she got dirty," he notes. "With shifts in exterior lighting, we were sometimes retouching shots in digital post to maintain the continuity of the texture of her coat. That took an eye for aesthetics that you can't program a computer to do with texture-mapping." — Bob Fisher

new Cooke Series-4 lenses, and Angenieux zooms. The film's second unit, led by director/cinematographer Shaun O'Dell, used an Arri 435, another set of Cooke series-4s, and a 10:1 zoom. The second-unit crew consisted of some 20 people, including first assistant Mick Walsh and focus puller John Conroy.

Animal Farm marks O'Dell's return to long-form production. He served as camera operator on such films as *Willow*, *The Princess Bride* and *Alien* before turning his attention to commercials. Describing a montage sequence of the animals gathering hay in the field, O'Dell quips, "The geese were very good value. We put little harnesses on them with little pouches, and they would pick up the straw in their beaks and put it in the pouches. The sheep were very awkward, and we helped the goat's performance quite a bit. In the foreground, it looks as if he's using a rake to push hay into stacks, but he really isn't.

"You can't *make* animals do what you want them to do," O'Dell notes. "You have to *ask* them very, very nicely." Of course, even the most polite entreaties don't always work. One of the biggest problems facing the filmmakers was that different species of animals apparently don't like to stand next to one another, and the script called for numerous group shots, especially inside the barn.

The solution was to digitally compose these complex shots by shooting various takes from the same angle, with each featuring different animal performers. Appropriate portions of the individual takes would then be combined into a new whole, creating the desired "group shot" effect. However, the desire to add camera movement into these shots added another level of complexity. "We didn't want to use motion control because it's very time-consuming and fairly expensive," comments Brewster. "Instead, Angus Bickerton suggested that we

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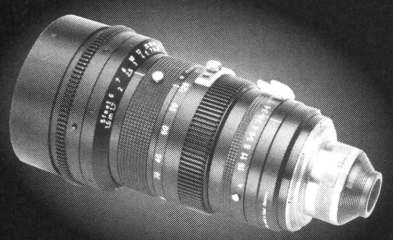


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A Battle for the Barn



Jessie the dog sits next to his animatronic (yet very realistic) stand-in.

shoot the wide group shots in VistaVision with a locked-off camera. After scanning and compositing the various elements, we could then digitally pan across the wide VistaVision frame to create a synthetic tracking shot. It worked fairly well.

"We also shot separate foreground elements that could be mixed into a shot later. We could even track a foreground element at a separate pace to create a unique perspective. The background might hardly move at all while the foreground moves a lot, which gives the impression of a perspective change. That tactic is a bit of a cheat, but it was very successful in certain shots."

Fortunately, the live animals didn't seem to mind their animatronic co-stars, but the numerous cables and hydraulics needed to operate the Henson-built creatures restricted Brewster's ability to keep the camera moving. That was a bit of an inconvenience, since he wanted to employ fairly active compositions to compensate for the relatively static faux animals. Furthermore, the animatronic horses, donkeys and goats had no hind quarters, and had to be framed in such a way that their backsides wouldn't show. Any time an entire horse, donkey or goat appears onscreen, it's the real thing.

Interestingly, the animal actors were not completely averse to the filmmaking activity going on around them. For a scene in which the beasts erect a windmill, O'Dell used a crane with a hothead to cover the action. The four-legged thespians quickly adjusted to the camera swooping around them, whereas they would have been frightened if a human had tried the same maneuver.

A scene in which the animals break down the front door of the farmhouse and explore the dwelling for the first time became a series of POV shots. "I wanted to make the interior of the house appear dark and mysterious by creating shadows on the walls," notes O'Dell. "I placed 10Ks and 20Ks outside and lit through the windows. We then created shadows mainly with flags, but I also used real objects that were on the set, like the staircase and the net curtains that hung across the windows. You can't see the pattern on the curtains, but you get different densities of light. The sequence was a bit complicated since I was hand-holding the camera; I had to make sure that when I panned around, I wasn't standing in front of a light and accidentally catching the shadow of my head."

Time was always in short supply during the production of *Animal Farm.* Sometimes the simplest setup consumed the greatest number of hours. One brief shot finds the animals standing together at the farm's front gate and watching the humans retreat. The scene

Российские вертолеты все-таки умеют летать в темноте

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NHK team rescued from Arctic

MOSCOW (Kyodo) A three member team from Japan... Broadcasting Corp (NHK)...

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Last bid to rescue Arctic film crew

...Y SUE MASTERMAN

...rescuers were stranded in a howling blizzard at minus twenty degrees. Rebecca Scott, the partner of Australian film maker Rory McGuinness, told a Melbourne radio station: "I think this week is probably the last [illegible]

Making news

making news

Arrow 50

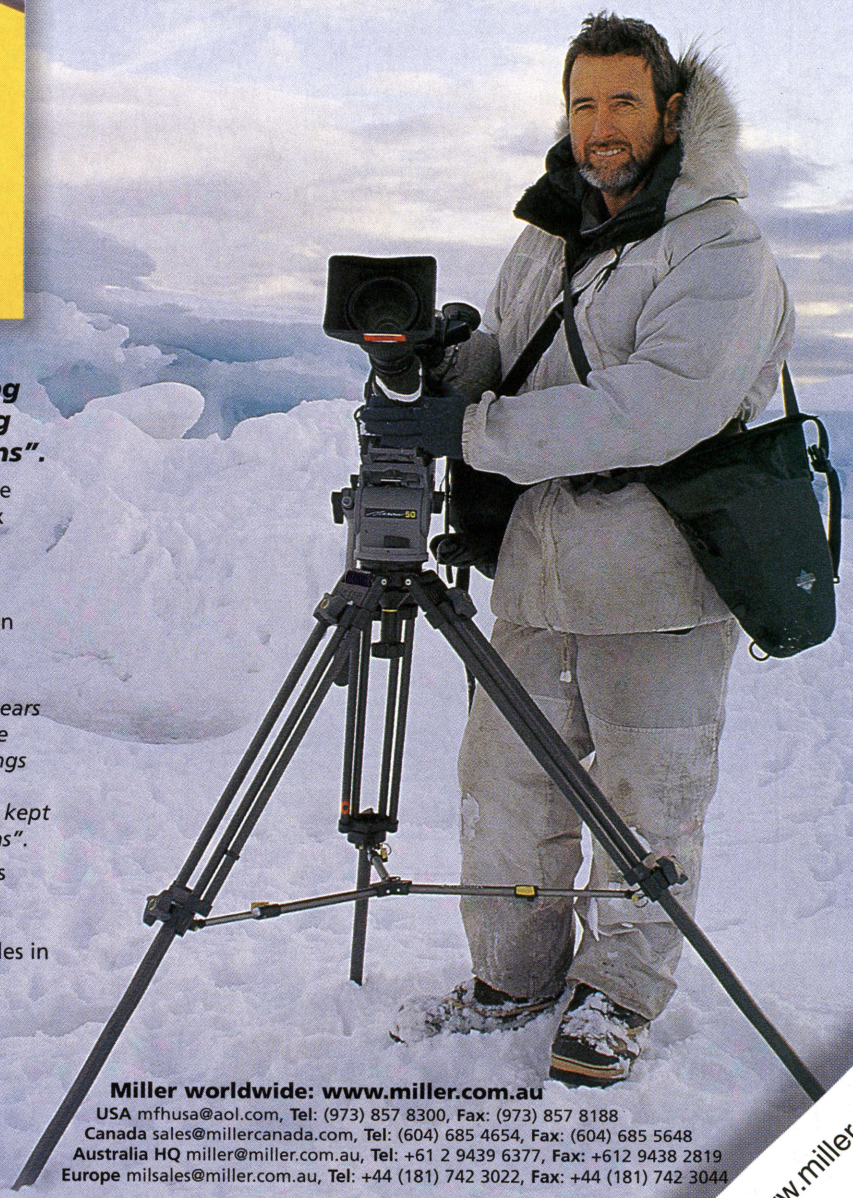


"The Arrow 50 retained the subtlety of control on the drag settings and kept functioning smoothly in the worst conditions".

Cinematographer Rory McGuinness made news recently when he was stranded for six weeks on an island in the remote Siberian arctic. While awaiting rescuers, Rory kept shooting the polar bear documentary in conditions that made incredible demands on crew and equipment.

"We had minus 25 to 30 Celsius, plus windchill, but while we had filmstock and bears we just kept shooting. It soon sorted out the gear. Some of it froze solid, while other things just kept going. The Arrow 50 retained the subtlety of control on the drag settings and kept functioning smoothly in the worst conditions".

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A Battle for the Barn



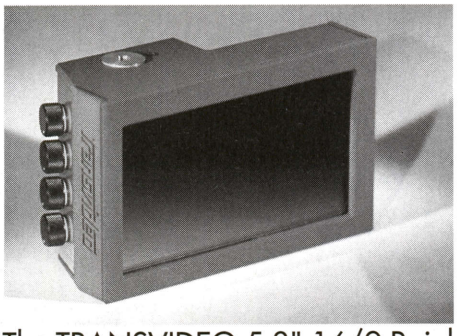
The animals enter the farmhouse. Brewster lit the scene almost entirely though the windows, using flags and prop items to break up the light and cast unusual shadows that would heighten the alien nature of the dwelling.

demanded an array of animals in the frame, and the aforedescribed method of creating synthetic "group shots" was employed. "We started the shot at 7:30 a.m. and finished at 7:30 p.m., and the camera never moved," recalls O'Dell wearily. "It was locked the whole day, and we just wheeled in one animal after another and positioned them with their heads looking out over the gate."

Weather presented another problem. Although the cold, rainy Irish climate was precisely what the filmmakers wanted, working in such conditions proved uncomfortable and frequently frustrating. "It could take a week to shoot a sequence because the light in Ireland changes so much," says Brewster. "I would generally start with the wide stuff, and whatever the lighting conditions were, I would then have to make it match as the sequence went on throughout the week." Sometimes the second unit finished a scene that the first unit had begun two months earlier.

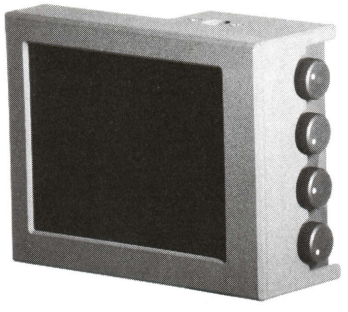
However, Brewster could usually finesse the situation. For instance, the filmmakers began shooting the humans' first assault on the farm on a cloudy day, exactly the type of conditions they wanted. Naturally, the following morning was sunny and clear, so the crew erected a 20' x 20' Griffolyn, white side down, and bounced in 18Ks to fill shadow areas and suggest a flat, gray-day look. By late afternoon, the sun went behind the barnyard, throwing the whole area into shade, and the frame could be dismantled.

Filming began the middle of August and continued into the third week of November, and as the weeks passed, the days got shorter and



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shorter. Toward the end of the shoot, the sun was setting by 4 p.m., and Brewster was forced to do some night-for-day lighting. One such sequence was the film's opening scene, which takes place during a thunderstorm. "We basically used the location as one would a studio setting," remarks Brewster. "We just bounced our 18Ks into this big white top cover as an overall illumination, supplementing it with a key light."

The intricacies of animal behavior soon became common knowledge for the filmmakers. However, getting normally docile animals to attack humans, or rather to *appear* as if they were, proved to be a bit of a puzzle. Brewster recalls, "We would often throw geese and ducks and chickens at [actor] Pete Postlethwaite. With careful editing and visual effects, we created the illusion that the animals were attacking the humans."

Another scene required the animals to dance around a campfire. Because animals don't like to go near flames, O'Dell and his second unit shot the fire as a background plate, and CG versions of the animals were added later.

Soho Images in London handled the project's laboratory chores, and O'Dell and Brewster would meet every morning to look at some of the first-unit rushes, generally on tape. "You never really know what you're getting on film if you're looking at video dailies," muses Brewster. "I gave [the telecine operator] a gray scale every day and told him to grade to it. Because of the changing weather, I'd compensate my lighting all day long while shooting to make sure it all matched. But if they graded to that one gray scale at the beginning of the day, everything would follow suit, and I would know what I was doing."



Napoleon the pig has his sights set on the total domination of his barnyard fellows.

Looking back, Brewster marvels that *Animal Farm* ever even got off the ground. "Everyone initially thought it was impossible," he remembers. "Mixing that many animals with the amount of animatronics we had was daunting. John Stephenson always had great faith in the project, though. He is the most patient man I have ever met." ■



Watts Up With SoftSun 3.3K?

What's the best new way to light interiors for the ever-popular car chase? Leave it to veteran action cinematographer David Eggby whose credits range from *Mad Max* to the forthcoming *Blue Streak*.

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Using SoftSun's dimmer panel, Eggby positioned himself in the towing vehicle and adjusted intensity as the shot progressed. "SoftSun let us reverse vehicle directions without a new setup. We drove in one direction, turned around, reprogramed the control unit to compensate for the varying sun position, then shot again with no down time."

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Raising Kane

The inventive docudrama *RKO 281* recounts the turbulent creation of Orson Welles's classic film debut, *Citizen Kane.*

by Mark Salisbury Unit photography by Stephen F. Morley

The 1941 film *Citizen Kane* has proved enormously influential for generations of filmmakers who have carefully studied director Orson Welles's visionary narrative structure and cinematographer Gregg Toland, ASC's stunning black-and-white photography, which earned the renowned camerman top honors on *American Cinematographer*'s recent list of Best-Shot Films (1894-1949) in the March '99 80th Anniversary issue.

The HBO production *RKO 281* (which refers to the film's RKO Pictures production number), presents a behind-the-scenes look at the making of this cinematic masterpiece, albeit a heavy mythologized one. Written by John Logan, *RKO 281* takes large factual liberties for the sake of drama, mixing known reality with myth, legend and Hollywood folklore. Starring Liev Schreiber as Welles, the story depicts the actor/director's intense collaboration with screenwriter Herman Mankiewicz (John Malkovich); his experiences shooting the picture with Toland (Liam Cunningham); his battles with the establishment and RKO head George Schaefer (Roy Scheider); and the film's effect on both Hollywood and William Randolph Hearst (James Cromwell), the newspaper tycoon whose affair with actress Marion Davies (Melanie

Photos courtesy of HBO.

Griffith) was the inspiration for *Kane*'s central drama.

Executive-produced by brothers Ridley and Tony Scott, *RKO 281* was directed by fellow Brit Benjamin Ross, whose critically acclaimed debut feature, *The Young Poisoner's Handbook*, marked him as a new talent with considerable visual abilities. Ross believes the fictionalized moments in his film (including a scene in which Welles and Hearst actually meet, and speculation about the true authorship of the script) are well-justified. "Given the confines of what we're trying to do, it would be pretty stupid for a protagonist and antagonist not to meet," Ross says. "In terms of the controversy over who's more responsible for the script, I've tried to give dramatic weight — and equal claim — to both Mankiewicz and Welles, even though we present a very fudged version of what happened. Hopefully, viewers will come away from the story understanding something about the nature of collaboration."

Ross decided he needed help from someone with more experience than himself on *RKO 281*. He admits, "I knew I was going to be dealing with large sets, as well as problems in terms of the amount of coverage and setups, [so I needed] a director of photography who was both experienced and visually literate."

That somebody was Mike Southon, BSC. A former documentary cameraman for the BBC, Southon worked on the award-winning series *Arena* before branching out into commercials, music videos and films. His many credits include the features *Little Man Tate (see AC Sept. '91), Roommates, Run of the Country, A Kiss Before Dying, Gothic, Prisoner of Honor* and *Paperhouse,* as well as the HBO miniseries *Snow White: A Tale of Terror*, for which he received CableAce and ASC Award nominations for Best Cinematography (see *AC* May '98).



Opposite: Orson Welles (Liev Schreiber) whispers a suggestion to director of photography Gregg Toland (Liam Cunningham) as they plot a shot for *Citizen Kane*. This page: As his crew sets up on the steps of the Xanadu stage, director Welles makes opening remarks on the first day of the *Kane* shoot.

Southon has also worked extensively in the music-video field, shooting clips for U2, Seal, Prince and Depeche Mode, among many others. He earned Best Photography awards for George Michael's hit "Freedom" and Guns & Roses's epic metal ballad "November Rain."

At their first meeting, Southon and Ross were in complete agreement about the stylistic approach to *RKO 281*. "We didn't want this to be a movie about the making of *Citizen Kane* that was shot the way *Citizen Kane* was shot," Southon explains. "In other words, we didn't want this to be some kind of cheesy pastiche of what went on in that movie. The first thing I said was that our film had to have its feet firmly on the ground. The audience wouldn't take to the story if they felt we were being over the top. I wanted them to believe that everything was real."

Ross avers, "We didn't want to do an imitation, and we didn't want the film to be stylistically confined by what Toland and Welles had done, because otherwise you're not making your own picture. We had to reference their work in a way that enabled us to engage a modern audience. Every reference [to *Kane*] is subconscious, or has to do with how Welles found the idea for a particular shot. The trick was to give the movie the potential for visual sophistication without forcing it upon the audience, because a lot of people who watch it may not have seen *Kane*."

Southon began his preparations by immersing himself in *Citizen Kane*, studying frame enlargements from the original movie and watching the film over and over again. He slowly worked out what Toland was doing with light not just dramatically, but physically, in terms of placing his lights.

On the other hand, Ross choose not to watch *Kane* again, stating, "The last thing I wanted to do was sit and watch Welles's oeuvre, because I knew it. Instead, I wanted to look at other films, such as *New York, New York* [shot by Laszlo Kovacs, ASC] or *The Conformist* [shot by Vittorio Storaro, ASC, AIC] which were stylistic reference points for me. It struck me that *The Conformist* dealt with its topic, Fascism, in a way that was visually and architecturally very informed." In addition, Ross says he was inspired by the latter film's sense of dislocation: "I found that aspect of *The Conformist* very interesting because, architecturally speaking, London is fantastically rich. You can really shoot practically anything in London. It's a great joy to find 1940s California on your doorstep."

However, Ross was keen to avoid straying into the classical style depicted in such Los Angeles-based period films as *Chinatown, Devil in a Blue Dress* or *L.A. Confidential*: "I didn't want to do another on-the-

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Raising Kane



Cameraman Mike Southon, BSC effectively used bounce light throughout *RKO 281*. This banquet scene set at Hearst Castle was shot in London's Guild Hall.

nose, beautifully made, period reconstruction," he explains. "It's all been done much better than I could ever do it. We had to try something different."

According to Ross, Logan's script for *RKO 281* initially called for many re-creations of shots seen in *Kane*. The director offers, "We could have done that with $30-40 million, building all of the sets, but why? I think what we've done instead is more interesting. It's not a shot-for-shot remake like [the 1999 version of] *Psycho*. Our film couldn't exist without *Kane*, but it still had to have its own organic life."

The *RKO* script was rewritten, but still called for two specific setups from *Kane* to be replicated in order to show Welles and Toland at work. These were a scene set in Charles Foster Kane's campaign headquarters (for which Welles had ordered a hole cut into the studio floor to facilitate the ultra-low camera angle he required) and a sequence set on the vast staircase at Kane's mansion, Xanadu. "Only the wide-angle shot looking up from the pit in the campaign headquarters is an accurate re-creation," Ross admits. "In the shot down the Xanadu stairway at the end of *Kane*, actor Paul Stewart plays Raymond the butler. In the original film, he comes in off a pan, but in our film, we pull out and then pan down the stairs. You couldn't really call that a shot re-creation, and in ours the audience is supposed to be watching the shot through the camera's viewfinder."

These homages — however loose — inevitably caused Southon a few headaches, particularly in terms of the lighting. "We were going to be shooting every angle, not just the angles that would have been used for *Citizen Kane*. We were making a film about the making of a film; consequently, I had to be very true to the lighting of the original in a documentary sense. Yet the lighting also had to work when we turned around to show Toland watching the re-created scene from his camera."

Although Southon had access to a limited number of vintage lighting units used to dress his set, most weren't operational and couldn't be used for lighting. He also didn't want the re-created *Kane* set to seem overly lit. "It was real challenge to keep it looking good and not burnt-out or flashed-out. My dilemma was that I was shooting in color. If you're shooting monochrome, you're talking about tonality. When you're shooting in color, you're also talking about hue."

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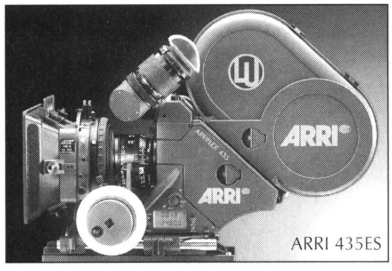
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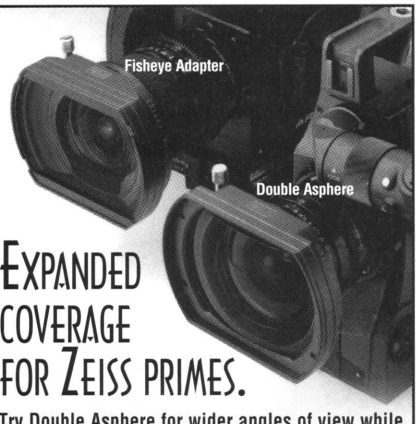
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Raising Kane

Another of Southon's challenges was reproducing Hollywood and New York at locations in England, with the help of production designer Maria Djurkovic. The cameraman explains, "I thought that if we began to take our visual look too much toward *Kane*'s expressionism, the audience just would not believe that they were in Hollywood. Instead, I wanted to ground the film, so wherever I could, I tried to simulate 'California' light. We obviously did this more on interiors than exteriors, because we had much more control inside."

Southon relied mainly upon HMI Pars to reproduce the effects of intense California sunshine. "They've got an enormous amount of power," he maintains. "You can project them over very long distances by swapping the lenses on them in a way you can't with Fresnels. With Fresnel lights, you tend to lose a lot of power if you spot them, whereas with HMI Pars you just slip different lenses in."

Serendipity sometimes took a hand in matters, and the Great Cinematographer in the Sky looked down kindly upon Southon, most notably during the shooting of a scene in which Welles and his *Kane* crew, having spent an entire night filming on the Kane campaign headquarters set, emerge into the early morning sunshine on a busy studio lot. Exhausted but exuberant, Welles grabs a passing showgirl and dances with her. The scene involved a crane shot and dozens of extras, cars, and even a horse; it was planned for a Saturday morning shoot at Shepperton Studios, which was closed that day. "Again, there was no way I could light this huge scene [as daylight] if we'd had bad weather, and it had been raining the day before," Southon says. "Fortunately, the sun came out just before we turned over, and we got the shot."

What made the situation even more fortuitous was that Southon had already shot the reverse of the scene from within the studio, with the door opening and morning sunlight flooding in. "You have to follow your instincts," he remarks. "We could have played it very safe and not shown the sunlight coming through the door. But you've got to take risks, so we just hoped and prayed that we'd get the sunlight we needed while we were outside."

Sometimes, however, the choice of location prevented Southon from using any sunlight at all. One such scene involves a dialogue between Hearst and Louis B. Mayer in the studio head's office. In an attempt to force Hollywood to bury *Kane*, Hearst makes threatening comments about the Jewish presence in Tinseltown. One of many office-bound scenes in the film, it was shot at a London insurance company, where the windows were frosted to obscure the skyline outside. The location was full of dark wood, and the cinematographer used the decor to his advantage by positioning Mayer's desk in an alcove surrounded by windows, effectively backlighting the character. Other characters entering the room were automatically played against a much darker background, an ambience that Southon sought to exploit. "That really pays off when Hearst keeps stressing the word 'Jews,'" the cinematographer remarks. "We have him in a black long overcoat with a black hat on. He is in the dark, wooded part of the room with Mayer surrounded by light. This effect could immediately produce a visual metaphor about the two characters, so we had to bite the bullet and say, 'Okay, there will be sunshine coming in [to frontlight Hearst], and we'll split the room into light and dark.'"

Many of the film's other interiors were much larger in scale. These included several open-plan restaurants in London, such as the Titanic and Atlantic Bar & Grill, each of which can feature up to 100 tables. Since many of the interiors were also



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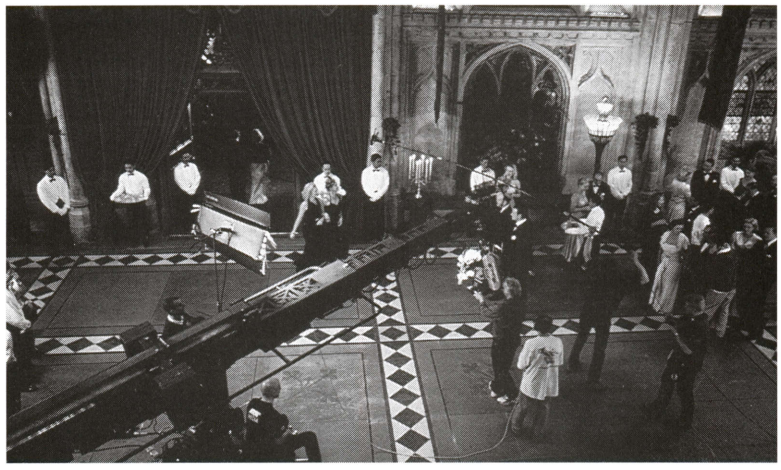
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Raising Kane



Setting up a crane shot while shooting at Guild Hall. Extensive location work gives *RKO 281* an air of period authenticity, and Southon was able to find sites that allowed him to effectively re-create the film's Southern California setting.

art deco in design, with beautifully detailed ceilings, Southon didn't want to hang any lights from above. The cinematographer was able to hew to this plan, thanks to Kodak's new 5289 Vision 800T stock, which he first tested in his own Victorian home. While the cameraman found that he could even push it to 1600 ASA (which resulted in a very acceptable emulsion, especially for available-light night work), he stuck with the suggested 800 ASA rating for his work on *RKO 281*. Recalling his tests, Southon says, "I wanted to see how it held up [when pushed,] because one of the things I don't like doing is shooting wide-open. I like to work around the T4 mark if I can. I love the depth of that kind of look. We were knocked out by the 800T, which was only fractionally grainier than 500T [Vision 5279]."

With this strategy in mind, Southon began exploring different ways of shaping the light for interior scenes. "Using the 800T, I began to look at doing most of the lighting with practicals," he explains, "We were not shooting cinema verité, but putting practicals where I wanted them and using them to do a lot of the work in these big rooms." For close-ups, however, Southon relied mainly on Kino Flos — sometimes just a single Kino Flo tube with an egg crate.

Southon also used Kodak's EXR 5293 and Vision 500T on *RKO 281*. His A-camera on the picture was a Moviecam, but he used his own Aaton 35-III as a B-camera. "The Moviecam is a very fast camera, and not overly heavy. The Aaton, however, is incredibly light; it's great



it's great for remote heads. There's a significant weight difference between an Aaton and a Moviecam, so you'll have fewer problems with bounce from the head. The Aaton offers radically different options for handheld work because it's so lightweight. We've done two handheld sequences in this film, and both are explosive."

Southon initially wanted to use Cooke lenses on *RKO 281*, partly because he knew he was intending to work with practicals and would consequently have a lot of very hot sources in the frame. When the Cookes proved unavailable, he opted mainly for Zeiss primes (running the gamut from 14mm to 135mm), as well as a 200mm Canon and an Optex Borescope for shots that examine the inner workings of a running movie camera. He avoided zooms altogether because of director Ross's dislike for them. "Everyone is talking about how the Cookes will not flare, but I was very pleased with the Zeisses," he says. "We have not had a single problem, even with very hot light sources in a shot."

AC visited the *RKO 281* production during its final week of shooting at Bray Studios in Berkshire (formerly the home of Britain's Hammer Films), and found the atmosphere to be remarkably relaxed. There was no sense of last-minute schedule panics — a situation that was undoubtedly aided by the crew's background in rapid-fire music video production which, Southon says, has given them an edge. "We don't hang about," he says. "I like to give a director as much time as possible. It's much better for the director to have time than the cinematographer. I get kind of edgy if things are moving slowly."

One particular scene provided a case in point: a simple yet impressively heroic setup that Ross confesses to lifting from *The Right Stuff*. The sequence begins as two electricians sitting in the rafters on a soundstage gaze downward to see Gregg Toland entering the almost-empty building. Inside, Toland finds Orson Welles toying with a snow-globe while standing in front of a scale model of the Xanadu set. Opening his bag, the cinematographer removes the Academy Award he'd won for *Wuthering Heights* and places it down in front of Welles, remarking, "I want to shoot your picture."

For this shot, Southon employed the Aaton 35-III with a 28mm Zeiss lens mounted on a Scorpio remote head/Phoenix crane rig. The camera began on the electricians and executed a fast drop to reveal Welles in the foreground, with a dramatically backlit Toland walking toward him. The camera then tracked in tighter on the two film-

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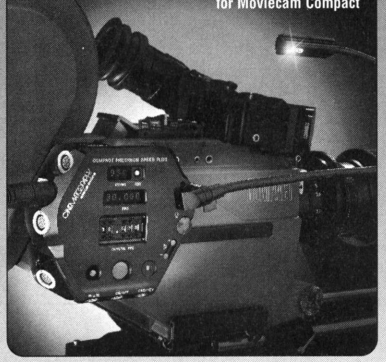
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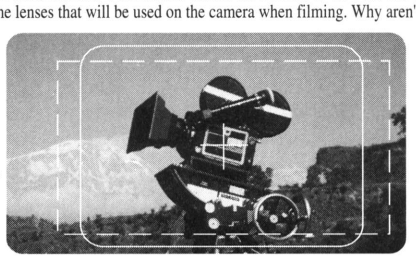


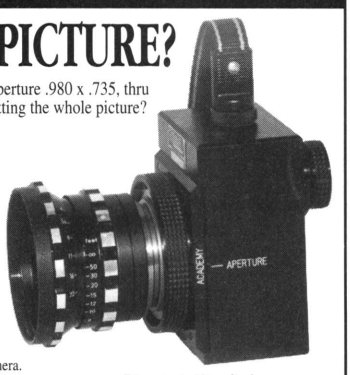
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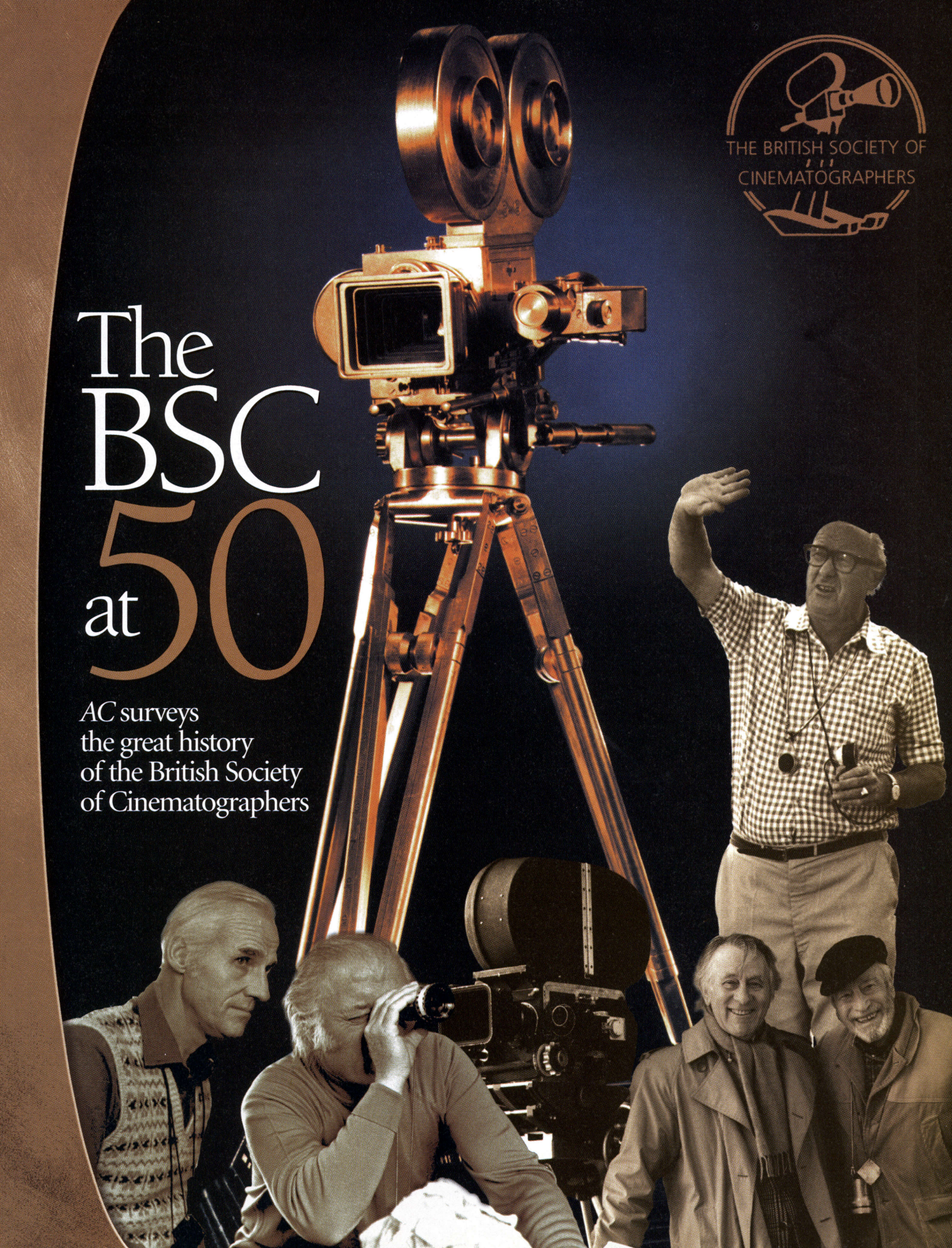
Raising Kane

makers. Southon lit the stage interior using four 6Ks, two on each side of the stage, bouncing off 20' x 20' silks. Outside, Southon placed two 12K HMI Pars on a cherrypicker to create a swath of light that would pour in through the studio door as Toland entered, an effect enhanced by a touch of smoke and the fortuitous return of the rare British sunshine. Up in the rafters, a 4K was bounced into a sheet of white card to give the two electricians a soft rim light.

For Southon, the shoot's most amusing moments occurred when he was asked to reproduce well-known newsreel footage that would later be integrated into existing material. "We had a ball trying to reproduce the reality of newsreel footage, the casual way accidents happen when cameras are rolling on real events rather than on sets. We did things like rolling the camera and not telling anyone except the lead actors, so the extras wouldn't know they were being filmed. We forced Ian to make some bad camera moves, because the footage had to look as if the newsreel cameraman didn't have a proper head to work with."

The newsreel footage was shot on 35mm color stock and later reduced to monochrome, with its grain and gamma levels altered. Rather than adding scratches to this faux news footage, however, the filmmakers tried to make it look as pristine as possible. Southon explains, "[In the context of *RKO 281,*] this newsreel is being seen a year after it was shot, and most newsreels looked very good on 35mm. The newsreel cameramen basically used the same equipment and emulsions that Toland used to shoot *Kane.* The [scratched-up vintage] newsreels you see today have been through a projector at least 20 or 30 times. That's not how they would have looked in theaters at the time.

"In fact," Southon adds with a laugh, "if the footage *had* been scratched, the cameraman probably would have been sacked." ■



The BSC at 50

AC surveys the great history of the British Society of Cinematographers



A Golden Anniversary

The British Society of Cinematographers celebrates 50 years of filmmaking history.

by John Gainsborough

In 1947, when the idea of a British society for feature film cameramen was first being discussed, the country was slowly struggling back to normal after World War II. Clothes and some foods were still being rationed. Television was a novelty, and the cinema highly popular. American films were providing a war-weary population with a welcome touch of glamour and escapism. Shirley Temple was appearing in one of her last movies, *Honeymoon,* Vittorio de Sica was completing his neo-realist classic *The Bicycle Thief* in Rome, and location shooting on the Technicolor production of *Red Shoes* had just begun in Paris. All of the London film studios had resumed full-scale production, and there was a new sense of optimism in the industry.

That year, two British cameramen won both of the Academy Awards for Best Cinematography: Guy Green, BSC for *Great Expectations* (black-and-white) and Jack Cardiff, BSC for *Black Narcissus* (color). "Winning those Oscars added fuel to the excitement and renaissance of British pictures at the time," recalls Oswald Morris, OBE, BSC, then just demobilized from the Air Force, in which he had been a pilot throughout the war.

In this encouraging atmosphere, Bert Easey, head of the camera department at Pinewood and Denham studios, launched his concept for a non-political society for film cameramen, in a speech given at a dinner for directors of photography, camera crews and other film personnel in London on January 15, 1947. The idea was well-received, and after a series of meet-

Photos courtesy of the BSC and the British Film Institute. Photo this page by John Henshall, FBIPP, FRPS.

ings with leading cameramen, the British Society of Cinematographers Limited was formed and registered in September of 1949, with 55 members and an initial capital of £55. The Society was closely modeled along the lines of the American Society of Cinematographers, which had been founded 30 years earlier.

The founders of the BSC included many cinematographers who would later become very well-known. At the time, most were under contract to the established film studios in and around London. Bert Easey ensured that all of the studios were consulted regarding the formation of the Society, and provided an outline of their proposed objectives to the camera department heads and other cinematographers. Among the cameraman he originally contacted were Bryan Langley (of Associated British Studios), Otto Heller (Warner Bros.), Georges Perinal (Alexander Korda Productions), Guy Green (Pinewood and Denham studios), and Desmond Dickinson (also at Denham).

The first president of the BSC, elected in 1949, was Freddie Young, who served a second term in 1957-60, and earned Oscars for *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Dr. Zhivago* and *Ryan's Daughter*. He was followed in 1952 by Green (still alive and well in 1999, and living in Beverly Hills), and in 1954 by Dickinson. Easey himself became secretary/treasurer, and the first Board of Governors included Dickinson, Jack Cardiff, Lovat Cave Chinn and Derrick Williams.

As Bryan Langley, now aged 90, recalls, Denis Wratten, a descendant of the developer of the Wratten filter system and subsequently a board member of Eastman Kodak, stated that "one of the great benefits of the Society will be to make cameramen articulate." According to Langley, Wratten also expounded on the importance of running the Society in the style of a business.



Overleaf (p. 91), counter-clockwise around the BSC Award: Billy Williams, BSC sets a shot with Sir Richard Attenborough while filming *Gandhi;* BSC fellows Freddie Francis and Freddie Young pose with a 65mm camera similar to the one Young used to shoot *Lawrence of Arabia*; Geoffrey Unsworth, BSC checks his light while shooting *A Bridge Too Far.* Opposite page: The BSC turned out in force to help celebrate Freddie Young's 90th birthday in 1992. The event was organized by Michael Samuelson, BSC and held at Pinewood Studios. Young (at center with his wife, Joan) helped found the BSC and was the Society's first president. This page: Captain Ahab (Gregory Peck, seated) may have commanded his ship, but director of photography Oswald Morris, BSC (foreground) was in command of the camera while filming *Moby Dick* (1956) for director John Huston.

It was not all smooth sailing at the outset. The ACT union (later the ACTT, or Association of Cinematograph and Television Technicians) thought that the BSC intended to be a rival guild, and it took some work to convince them that this was not the case. In his book *Seventy Light Years*, Freddie Young wrote that several cameramen met with the general secretary of the ACT, George Elvin, in a pub on Wardour Street. Elvin told them flatly, "We're not keen on the idea [of the BSC], we think it will take authority away from the union." The cameramen assured him that they would leave the employment and working conditions to the union, while they discussed cameras, lighting and other technical matters. "Nevertheless, we don't want you to do it," said Elvin. Young records their response: "Well, we are going to do it whether you like it or not." On that note, the meeting broke up. Jack Cardiff, who was also in attendance, recalls, "It was quite a battle, which we won in the end."

The BSC had clear objectives, and was established to:

1.) Promote and encourage the pursuit of the highest standards in the craft of motion picture photography;

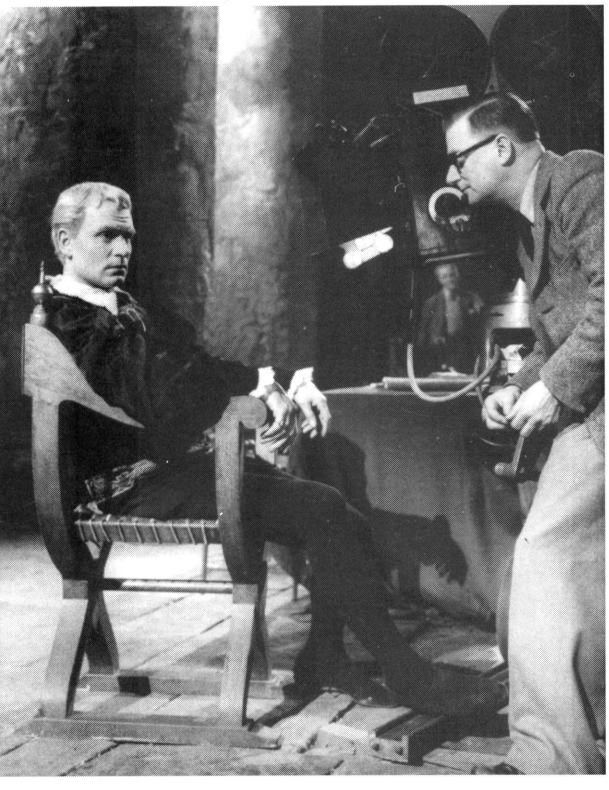
2.) Further the application by others of high standards in the craft of motion picture photography, and encourage original and outstanding work;

3.) Cooperate with all whose aims and interests are wholly or in part related to those of the Society;

4.) Provide facilities for social discourse between the members and arrange lectures, debates and meetings calculated to further the objectives of the Society.

The BSC board originally held its monthly evening meetings in the homes of individual governors, often

A Golden Anniversary



Desmond Dickinson, BSC, a founding member of the Society, sets a shot on director/star Sir Laurence Olivier while filming *Hamlet* in 1948. Dickinson was the president of the Society from 1954-57.

finishing very late. Their first urgent task in 1949 was to gain acceptance for the initials "BSC" on the credits of every picture shot by Society members. Though vital to establishing the BSC in the eyes of the industry, this goal was not easy to achieve. Accomplishing it required persistent efforts by the board in meetings with the BFPA (British Film Producers Association), and by individual BSC members with individual producers on each production. The results were patchy. For instance, in 1951, Desmond Dickinson reported that he had received the BSC credit on *Encore* but not on his following production, *The Importance of Being Earnest*. During the following year, the board was still urging members "to get the screen credit of 'BSC' after their names more than has been the case in the past," and in 1953, the matter was again taken up with the BFPA on behalf of all members.

The second year of the Society, 1951, proved to be an exceptionally creative one for the country as a whole, as the government-backed Festival of Britain took off with a huge exhibition on the South Bank of the Thames. That year, Freddie Young was due to talk to members about his recent work in Hollywood; the Society board initiated a design for the scale-model camera that would be used as a BSC Award; and two Americans (ASC fellows Charles Rosher and Lee Garmes) were proposed as Society members. Reports of BSC activities were published in the (then) *BKS Journal*, the British equivalent of the *SMPTE Journal*. Meanwhile, at regular Society meetings, new tools were introduced to the membership, including the Kelly Calculator, a specialized circular slide rule for cameramen designed by W.B. Pollard, FBKS and Skeets Kelly (who worked on the device while they were prisoners of war). Intriguingly, the BSC also considered fostering the interest of the many 16mm clubs in the country at that time, and it was suggested that the Society consider an affiliation with the Royal Photographic Society, the leading organization dedicated to still photography.

An initial program of BSC technical meetings was soon arranged. In 1952, Lovat Cave Chinn informed the BSC board of the new research laboratories being built and equipped by Messrs. Joseph and André Debrie in Paris (in connection with the various continental color systems and Eastman Color material), and put forward the idea of an organized visit by BSC members. By July, he asked for the visit to be postponed, because the laboratory equipment for color processing had been dismantled and sold to meet the heavy demands for coverage of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth. When Debrie was finally up and running again, BSC members made a successful visit to the Paris laboratories in 1953. Arrangements were later made for a private screening of the three-color films of the coronation, which had been made using Technicolor, Eastman Color and Gevacolor.

Widescreen projection and camera technique was proposed as a subject for a subsequent meeting, and U.S.-based agent Spyros P. Skouras was approached to arrange an exhibition screening of CinemaScope. Ever mindful of the cooperation that is so important in filmmaking, there were moves to include artisans from the art, makeup and hairdressing departments, among others.

Film critics were guests of the BSC in 1951 — an event that was treated with kid gloves, as the board recorded in November that year: "Discussion followed on procedure for the next meeting, when our guests would be some of the critics. It was agreed that after the opening remarks by the president, a member of the board should follow immediately, and thus avoid a silent pause. Mr. Guy Green undertook to follow the president. Mr. Derrick Williams also suggested that speakers remain seated, thus avoiding embarrassment. This was agreed."

A recurring event which began as the BSC's "Guest Night Dinner" on December 7, 1951, "when members would be asked to entertain a guest, preferably their camera operator," was to become "Operators Night," one of the most popular and important functions on the Society's calendar. The event has since expanded to become the venue for the presentation of the Society's annual awards. These include the BSC Award for Best Cinematography, and the Technical Award (which is not presented unless there has been an outstanding technical achievement or advance during the preceding year).

The BSC Award for Best Cinematography is proposed and voted upon by the entire membership, and is appropriately held in great esteem. After receiving the

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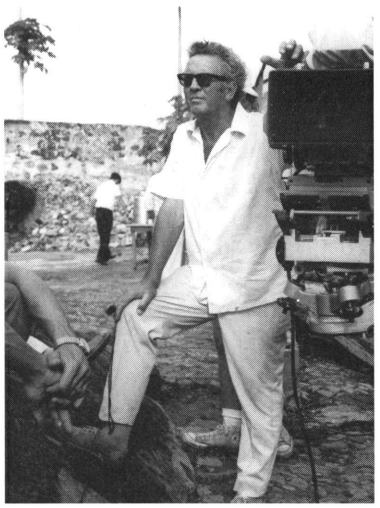
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Douglas Slocombe, BSC exudes an air of confidence on the set. He and peers such as Gilbert Taylor, BSC and Denys Coop, BSC helped establish a more "mod" approach to camerawork in the 1960s.

award in 1964 for *Becket,* BSC member Geoffrey Unsworth proposed that "to be judged the winner by one's professional colleagues is, perhaps, the highest honor of all."

The names of the BSC Award winners are included on the Honor Board in the Society's Clubroom at Pinewood Studios. They are also engraved on the base of the Society's Golden Camera, a scale model of a Mitchell NC camera on a tripod, which was made by George Ashworth, an engineer in the camera department at Pinewood at that time. The model is on permanent display in the studio's entrance hall, and is always present at the Society's social events. Originally, each recipient of the BSC Award received an engraved silver tankard, but the Society later commissioned famed production designer Ken Adam to design a special gold-plated "tabletop" camera model which is now presented to the honorees.

By 1955, the board of governors was having difficulties running the Society due to the members' increasing work abroad: Jack Hildyard shot *The Bridge on the River Kwai* in the Far East, while Freddie Young had just completed *Island in the Sun* in the West Indies, and was about to shoot *Solomon and Sheba* for United Artists in Hollywood. Desmond Dickinson, who was president in 1954-'55, reported that there was great difficulty in getting a quorum together at the board meetings, "owing to the fashion of the film business in having so many exterior pictures... and the sad lack of our Honorable Secretary, on whom falls a large load of work. He has been to the U.S. three times this year and has only just got back from his latest visit... in the last year we have had practically no meetings at all... I am sure you will agree that the BSC must not die... " A change of rules was necessary to ensure a quorum for every board meeting. The governors survived the crisis, opting at the same time for more informal meetings.

Membership slowly began to rise, and by 1958 the BSC had 61 members. It would take 13 more years before the membership reached 100 in 1971.

Also in 1958, the Society began publishing a newsletter to provide its far-flung members with news of each other's activities. Founded by George Gunn, the *BSC Newsletter* called upon members to submit regular news and information for publication, an activity supported by the Board, which was anxious for the project to continue. It was later taken over by other members, including Les Ostinelli BSC, an executive at Technicolor and staunch supporter of the Society. The *BSC Newsletter* is currently edited by Alex Thomson. Lively and often polemical, it now circulates to societies of cameramen around the world.

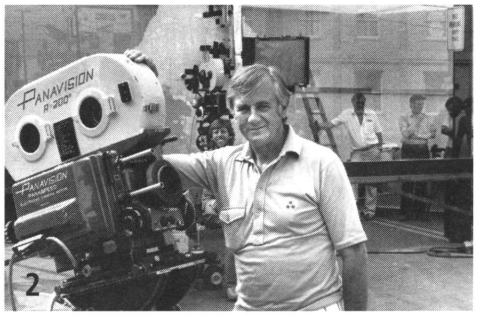
It was initially unlikely that a Society with the BSC's objectives would have an easy relationship with television. Concern first surfaced in 1962 about the poor quality of members' work after it had been scanned for broadcast, and the reception on home receivers. To the BSC's credit, the organization complained vigorously to manufacturers, calling for improved scanning equipment and receivers. At the same time, it was decided that the BSC should "make its presence felt at the cinemas on the matter of good picture presentation... to press for the adoption of a widescreen format of one standard only, and [for] projectors to be masked accordingly so that presentation [will provide] the correct headroom and full picture information, as on the print."

The Society was beginning to make its voice heard, but was only partially successful in achieving improvements at the time. It took many years before the developers of television technology came anywhere near addressing the cinematographers' concerns about image quality, though member Baynham Honri, charged with raising the issues with manufacturers, was able to report in 1964 that significant improvements had been made to the circuits of some British manufacturers television sets.

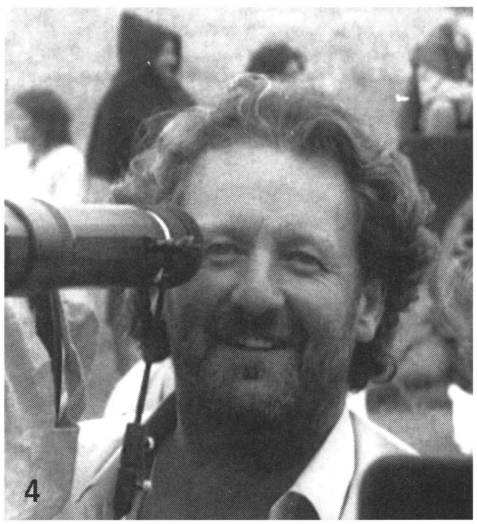
The BSC kept its lines open for discourse with television cameramen and technicians, and now has a good rapport with all sides of the industry. In the 1960s, the BBC and independent television companies, with their huge investment in heavy electronic studio cameras, also made extensive use of 16mm film for major productions, including dramas and news. The BBC, which used Arriflex (and later Aaton) cameras, had around 90 active film crews on their staff in the 1960s. Imaging for television could not be ignored. In 1973, the BSC records two particular meetings, one with the BBC and ITV Lighting Engineers, and another between the BSC and The Guild of Television Cameramen. The latter gathering concerned sports filming, a specific strength of the BBC, and prompted one BSC wag to comment, "There were brisk exchanges between electronic and 'steam' cameramen."

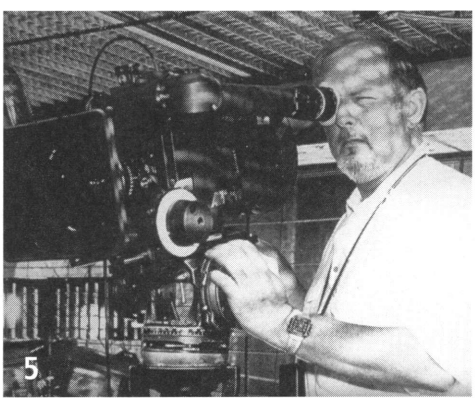
Attitudes were changing, however. When Billy Williams took over the presidency in 1975, he had just completed *The Wind and the*



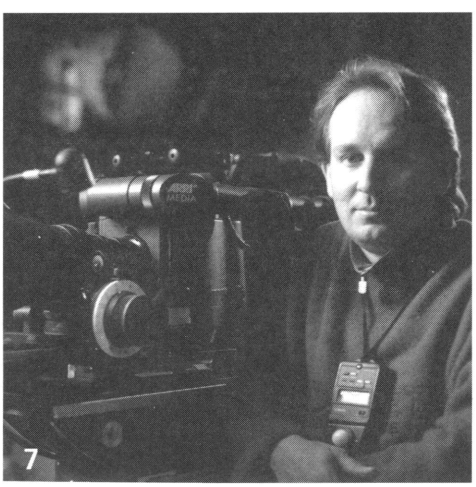


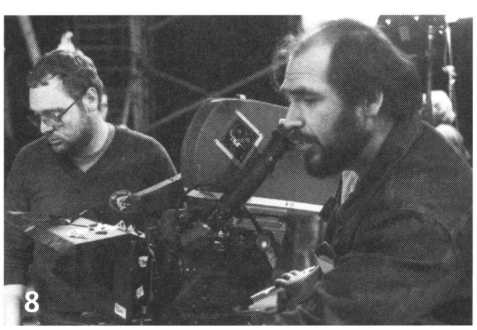














An array of BSC luminaries. From the top: (1) Current Society president Freddie Francis (left) chats with Guy Green and Peter Newbrook; (2) Alan Hume, whose credits include *Return of the Jedi*; (3) Peter Suschitzky, a second-generation cinematographer whose father, Wolfgang, was also a BSC member, and whose own son is now working behind the camera as well; (4) former BSC president Harvey Harrison; (5) Robin Vidgeon, a 1999 Society board member; (6) ASC associate member David Samuelson (center) and Sir Sydney Samuelson examine an Arriflex; (7) cameraman Ashley Rowe is one of the Society's youngest members; (8) Gabriel Beristain is now a resident of the U.S.; (9) Society secretary/treasurer Frances Russell with esteemed cameraman Douglas Slocombe.

Photos courtesy of the BSC.

British Society of Cinematographers Roster

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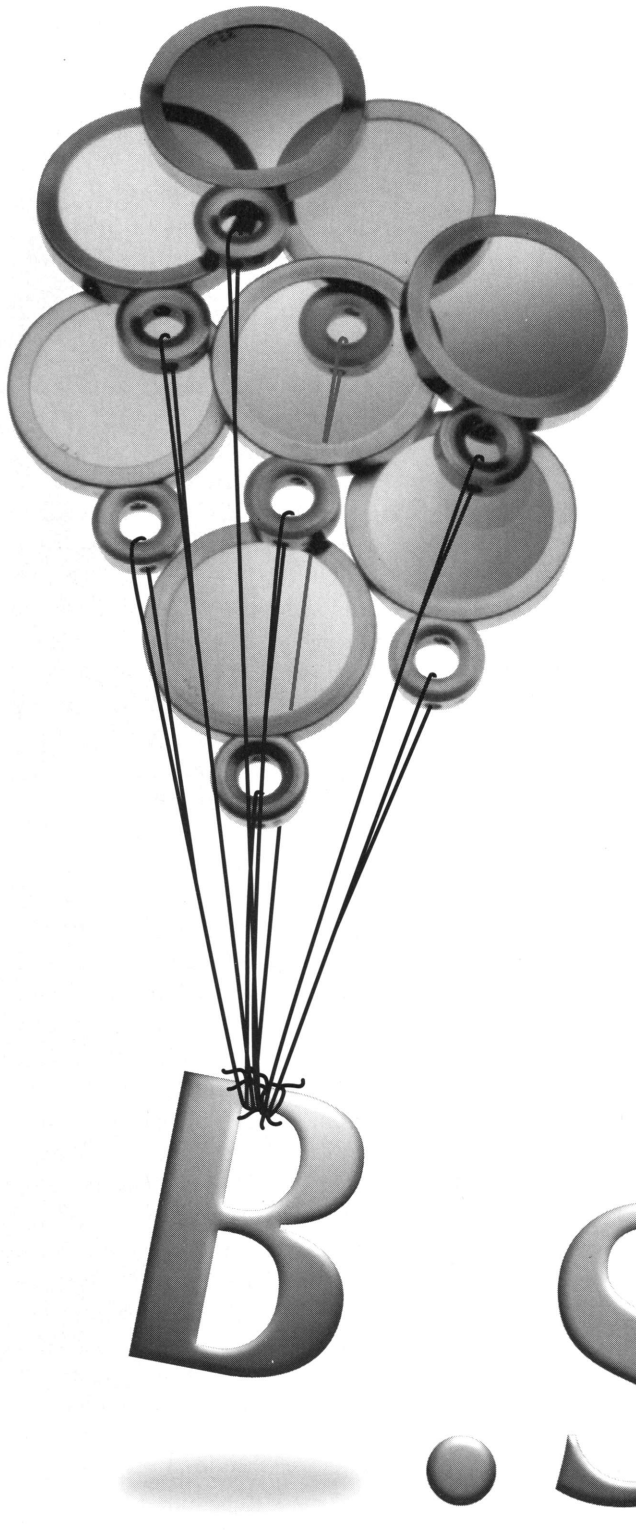
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"I would like to wish the British Society of Cinematographers the very best on their 50 years and also take a moment to remember my friend Stanley Kubrick"

Joe Dunton

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Lion for Columbia. He subsequently reported on a visit by members to the BBC's film camera department in 1976 — a significant step that served to recognize the work of the BBC's film cameramen. Williams reported, "Our hosts conducted members through an impressive display of 16mm camera and sound equipment. It was remarkable to consider the vast range of subject matter and varied conditions with which the BBC cameraman is confronted. A high standard of photographic quality was evident in the demonstration film involving every type of program, often hampered by a limited budget. A stimulating discussion with many of the BBC cameramen ensued. They have 93 crews in all, well-represented on this occasion."

The film department was later faced with a drastic decline in numbers when BBC film cameramen converted to electronic cameras, but others went freelance, and a number moved into feature work and became successful members of the BSC. Over the past 10 years, BAFTA nominees and winners have included four former BBC cameramen who are now full BSC members: Kenneth MacMillan for *Henry V* in 1989; Tony Pierce-Roberts for *Howard's End* in 1993; Andrew Dunn for *The Madness of King George* in 1995; and Remi Adefarasin for *Elizabeth* in 1998.

Adefarasin (also nominated for an American Oscar for *Elizabeth*), worked in the BBC film department for 28 years before going freelance. As he recalls, "All BBC trainees had an excellent grounding, including [exposure] to the sound and editing departments, which was particularly valuable. Afterwards, the experience we got with so many different cameramen on dramas, general programming and documentaries was invaluable. I've found that the help and support I got within the BBC film department is very similar to that within the BSC." ➢

The question of a permanent home for the BSC was discussed by members for years, particularly when BAFTA managed to house itself in good social facilities with two screens, in the middle of London, in 1974. Members of the BSC were encouraged to join BAFTA, but some years later it was conceded that members had (at that point) showed little enthusiasm for the idea of using BAFTA as a meeting point. To an extent, this case reflects the situation of various British guild or technical organizations. They collaborate and interact, but rarely integrate. BAFTA had a unique funding opportunity, but otherwise no one society or organization can afford to go it alone with a building of their own, and the BSC is no exception. In 1990, the Society acquired its own clubroom in the Old House at Shepperton Studios; though elegant, it has no screening facilities.

With an entirely male membership for most of its existence (there were no female members until 1992, but now there are two: Sue Gibson and Nina Kellgren), the record shows that the BSC long wrestled with the problem of accommodating its members wives somewhere in the Society's social program. Finally, in 1961, the Society inaugurated the annual "Ladies Night" (now renamed the "Dinner Evening") at the Savoy. After the 1962 edition of this event, president Oswald Morris tactfully announced to members, "I am sure you will all agree that Ladies Night proved a great success; in fact, I think it runs Operator's Night very close in the test of our social success. This no doubt stems from the fact that wives and operators have much in common in that they tend to run our lives for us, and are aware of our every weakness." The Society also holds an annual Summer Luncheon at Pinewood Studios for members and their partners.

In 1972, the year Geoffrey

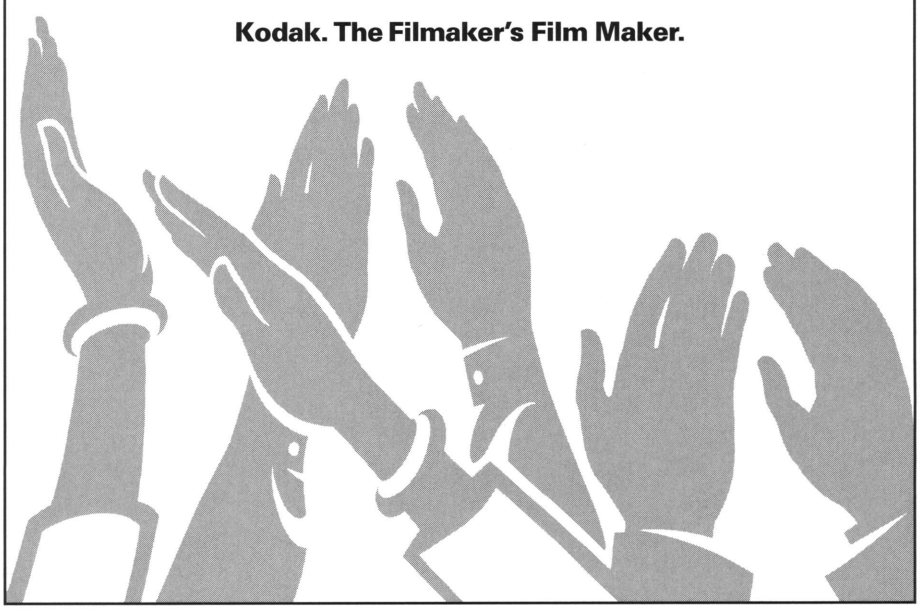
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A Golden Anniversary

Unsworth earned an Academy Award for *Cabaret*, Bert Easey died. He had been the father of the Society, serving as secretary and treasurer from the outset. In recognition of his huge contribution, the BSC renamed their technical award the Bert Easey Technical Award. Arriflex later sponsored the John Alcott Memorial Award, which the BSC decided should be given annually to the person who, in the opinion of the Board of Governors, had contributed most to the original aims of the Society. The first of these awards was given to Les Ostinelli, BSC in 1986.

Over the next 10 years, the Society continued to evolve in changing circumstances. After intense debate, associate membership was introduced in 1976. Many members were becoming older, and as they retired, they assumed the status of "honorary members."

In 1980, Bill Fraker, then president of the ASC, attended Operators Night at The Bull (the other guest that evening was producer Dick Lester). Fraker's attendance was widely seen as a confirmation of the close liaison between the two Societies.

There was continuing debate about the admission of television film cameramen to the BSC. A long-standing guideline (it was never a rule) governing "full membership" was that members should have lit a minimum of three features, but it kept proving difficult to maintain this approach in relation to television productions. By 1982, the BSC had 152 members.

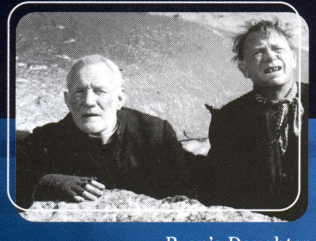
In 1986, director Fred Zinnemann enlisted the support of the BSC in his battle against colorization. He approached the Society the following year when an amendment to an American bill was due to be enacted to prohibit the practice without permission of an original film's "author." The early work of many members was in black-and-white, and they were understandably concerned. These movies included three films that had earned Academy Awards for Best Cinematography: *Great Expectations* (Guy Green, 1947), *The Third Man* (Robert Krasker, 1950) and *Sons and Lovers* (Freddie Francis, 1960).

Not incidentally, The last year in which an Academy Award was separately awarded for black-and-white work was 1964, when it was won by Walter Lassally, BSC for *Zorba the Greek*. During the 50 year's of the BSC's existence, members have garnered 20 Oscars and 46 nominations (see full list on page 104), as well as many other awards. Freddie Francis, the current BSC president, earned a second Oscar for *Glory* in 1989. In the preceding four years, BSC cinematographers earned Oscars for such films as *The Killing Fields* (Chris Menges, 1984), *Out of Africa* (David Watkin, 1985), *The Mission* (Chris Menges, 1986), and *Mississippi Burning* (Peter Biziou, 1988). In 1998, two members received Oscar nominations: Richard Greatrex for *Shakespeare in Love* and Remi Adefarasin for *Elizabeth*.

Since the BSC membership nominates and votes for the Society's own award for Best Cinematography, it is revealing to see how the cameramen evaluate each other's work. Since 1979, nominations and awards have included the work of European and American cinematographers, and the BSC's awards do not necessarily follow the lead of AMPAS or BAFTA. In 1983, for example, eminent Swedish cinematographer Sven Nykvist, ASC earned the BSC Award for the widely admired *Fanny and Alexander*. Both nominees in 1987 were French: Bruno Nuttyen for *Jean de Florette* and the winner, Philippe Rousselot, AFC for *Hope and Glory*. In 1988, the prize was awarded to Vittorio Storaro ASC, AIC for *The Last Emperor*, followed by three BSC members in a row before Pierre L'Homme, AFC earned the Award in 1991 for *Cyrano de*

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Star Wars

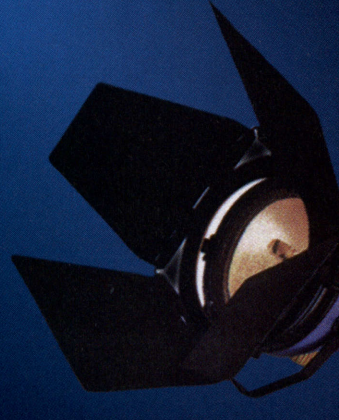


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A Golden Anniversary

Bergerac. In 1993, Janusz Kaminski, ASC won for *Schindler's List.*

In April of 1999, the BSC — inspired by the results of *AC's* first-ever Reader's Poll to determine the best-photographed films of all time (see the March '99 80th Anniversary issue) — polled its members to determine their own list of the 10 best cinematography films. The top five were clear-cut choices, but the second five had to be arranged in alphabetical order, as they all received an equal number of votes. The result, in list form, was as follows:

(1) *Lawrence of Arabia* (Freddie Young, BSC)
(2) *Dr. Zhivago* (Young)
(3) *Citizen Kane* (Gregg Toland, ASC)
(4) *The Third Man* (Robert Krasker, BSC)
(5) *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Geoffrey Unsworth, BSC)
(6-10) *Blade Runner* (Jordan Cronenweth, ASC); *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (Jack Hildyard, BSC); *Cabaret* (Unsworth); *Fiddler on the Roof* (Oswald Morris, OBE, BSC); *The Godfather* (Gordon Willis, ASC).

The BSC's Bert Easey Technical Award has been sparingly awarded by the Board of Governors, on average only once every two years. It is often awarded to an individual whose persistence and technical skill has been critically important to the film industry or even individual movies. Wally Veevers, BSC, who contributed first-rate special effects to Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* and other movies, was honored with the award in 1968. The following year, it was given to Robert Gottschalk for his outstanding lenses and the Panavision Silent Reflex camera, and in 1976, Garrett Brown was saluted for the invention of the Steadicam. Other Bert Easey awards were made to Technicolor in 1958 (for the introduction of Technirama); Eastman Kodak in 1970 (for a new color-reversal internegative — a great step forward in the production of all release prints from duplicates); Rank Taylor Hobson in 1988 (for lenses); Joe Dunton, BSC in 1992 (for his anamorphic lens system); and David Samuelson, BSC in 1995 (for his accomplishments as an "author, inventor and innovator").

From the outset, the BSC has had one key patron: Eastman Kodak, whose support was crucial to the fledgling Society, and continues to this day. Sponsorship has grown over the years, and today there are 36 patron members of the BSC. Individual members pay annual dues (there is no fee to join), and the combined income enables the BSC to fund a range of activities and programs.

There are now just over 200 full, honorary and associate BSC members. While it is primarily a society of feature film cinematographers, the Society includes members with very varied skills, experience and languages, many with wide international experience. Need a cameraman who can speak Cantonese or Hungarian, or who can film in the Arctic or the tropics, or in Imax 3-D? Look no further than the latest edition of the BSC Directory, which is updated regularly.

The BSC celebrated its official 50th anniversary in September of 1999, just months prior to the start of a new millennium. Freddie Francis, the BSC's current president, says he would like to make the organization much more widely known and appreciated, with a higher profile both in and out of the industry.

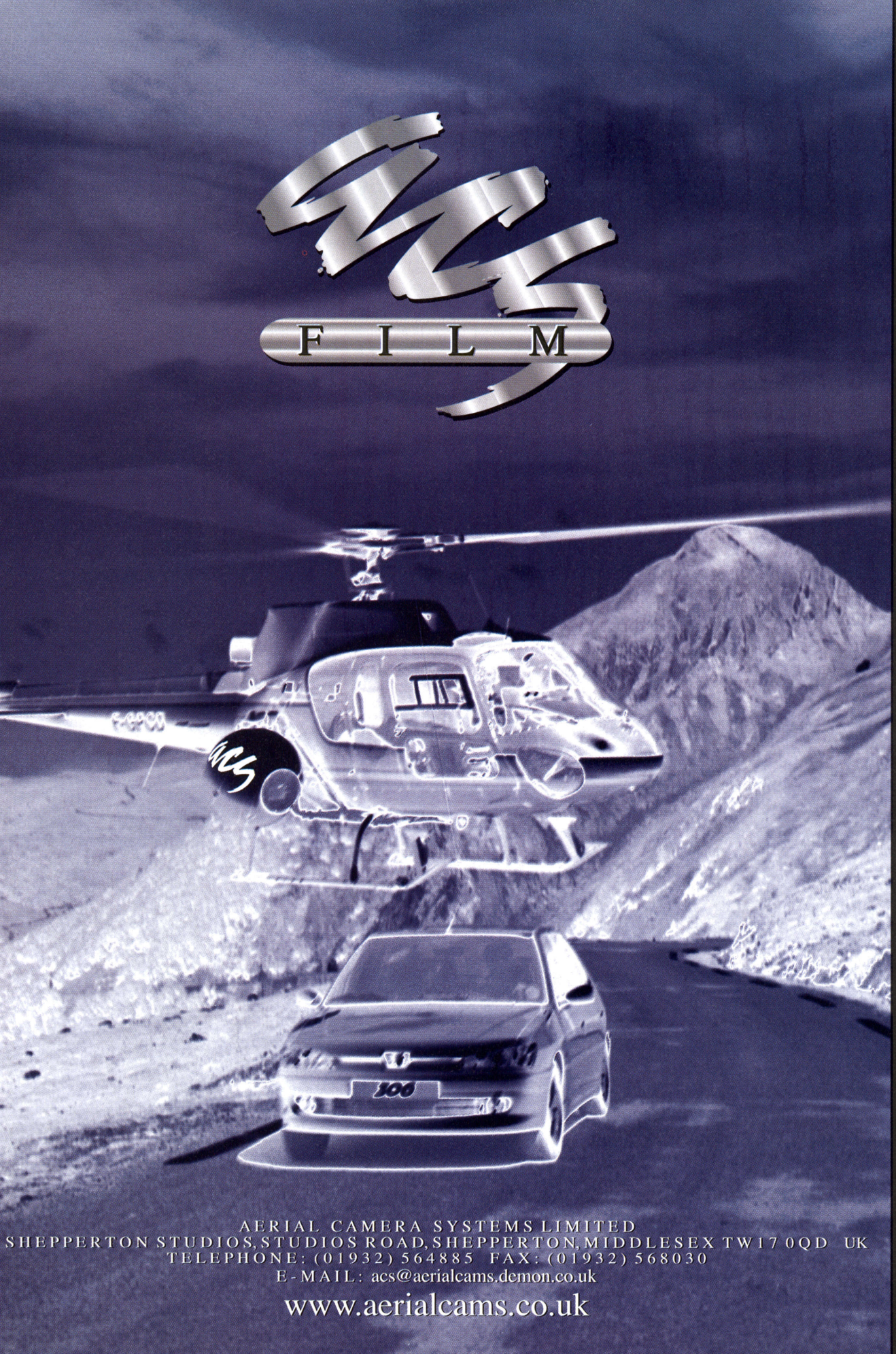
Directly and indirectly, many of the recent initiatives taken by the Society, as well as the activities of individual members, have contributed to this aim. The Society's "Portrait Project" is an ambitious series of filmed interviews with members. The Society's secretary, Frances Russell, explains, "The project led us to think that perhaps we should put all of the BSC legends on film for archival and educational purposes. So far, we have filmed interviews with Ossie Morris, Eric Cross, Freddie Young, Guy Green, Douglas Slocombe, Gil Taylor and Ronnie Neame. We hope to interview Freddie Francis next." The project began in 1996, and the producer of the first series is Peter Newbrook, BSC. According to Russell, the interviews were shot on 35mm "so that they can be shown at festivals and elsewhere."

Freddie Francis is hoping to continue with another series once the project achieves the necessary funding. "Videotape copies should be in every film school library," he suggests. Each interview runs between 45-60 minutes, and the BBC has already expressed interest in some of the material. A smaller but no less important record of member's credits, covering all productions "from the arrival of sound to the millennium," has been compiled by television researcher Jim Wilde, in collaboration with Paul Wilson, BSC and the British Film Institute (BFI). This material is now available on floppy disk. The Society's website (www.BSCine.com) also offers an abundance of reference material and information.

The BSC continues to have close formal and informal links with the ASC, and has established a more recent association with IMAGO, the Federation of European Cinematographers. The Society is closely affiliated with the British Cinematography Scholarship Trust (though training is still the subject of some debate among members), and is also a member of the Cine Guilds of Great Britain, which is perhaps the nearest it gets to a political voice.

A joint venture was recently launched by the Society and two of the Pullman cinemas in London, the Electric in Notting Hill and the

Continued on page 106



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AMERICAN ACADEMY AWARDS & NOMINATIONS FOR CINEMATOGRAPHY

Earned by members of the BSC

(* denotes winners)

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Georges Perinal, *Thief of Bagdad**

1947
Guy Green, *Great Expectations* (b/w)*
Jack Cardiff, *Black Narcissus* (color)*

1950
Robert Krasker, *The Third Man* (b/w)*

1952
Freddie Young, *Ivanhoe*

1956
Jack Cardiff, *War and Peace*

1957
Jack Hildyard, *The Bridge on the River Kwai*

1960
Freddie Francis, *Sons and Lovers* (b/w)*

1961
Jack Cardiff, *Fanny*

1962
Freddie Young, *Lawrence of Arabia**

1964
Walter Lassally, *Zorba the Greek* (b/w)*
Geoffrey Unsworth, *Becket* (color)

1965
Freddie Young, *Dr. Zhivago**

1966
Ted Moore, *A Man for All Seasons**
Ken Higgins, Georgy Girl (b/w)

1968
Oswald Morris, *Oliver*

1969
Arthur Ibbetson, *Anne of the Thousand Days*

1970
Freddie Young, *Ryan's Daughter**
Billy Williams, *Women in Love*

1971
Oswald Morris, *Fiddler on the Roof**
Freddie Young, *Nicholas and Alexandra*

1972
Geoffrey Unsworth, *Cabaret**
Douglas Slocombe, *Travels With My Aunt*

1974
Geoffrey Unsworth, *Murder on the Orient Express*

1975
John Alcott, *Barry Lyndon**

1977
Douglas Slocombe, *Julia*

1978
Oswald Morris, *The Wiz*

1980
Geoffrey Unsworth and Ghislain Cloquet, *Tess**

1981
Douglas Slocombe, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*
Billy Williams, *On Golden Pond*
Alex Thomson, *Excalibur*

1982
Billy Williams and Ronnie Taylor, *Gandhi**

1984
Chris Menges, *The Killing Fields**
Ernest Day, *A Passage to India*

1985
David Watkin, *Out of Africa**

1986
Chris Menges, *The Mission**
Tony Pierce-Roberts, *A Room With a View*

1988
Peter Biziou, *Mississippi Burning**

1989
Freddie Francis, *Glory**

1991
Stephen Goldblatt, *The Prince of Tides*
Adrian Biddle, *Thelma & Louise*

1992
Tony Pierce-Roberts, *Howard's End*

1994
Roger Deakins, *The Shawshank Redemption*

1995
Stephen Goldblatt, *Batman Forever*
Michael Coulter, *Sense and Sensibility*

1996
Roger Deakins, *Fargo*
Chris Menges, *Michael Collins*

1997
Roger Deakins, *Kundun*

1998
Richard Greatrex, *Shakespeare in Love*
Remi Adefarasin, *Elizabeth*

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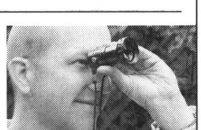
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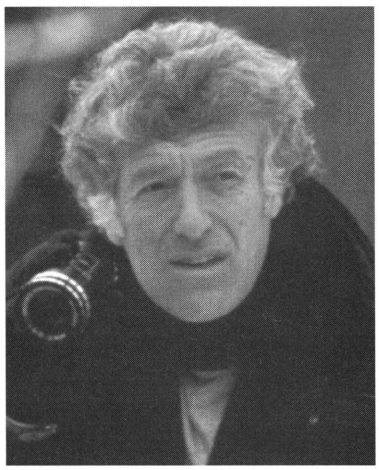


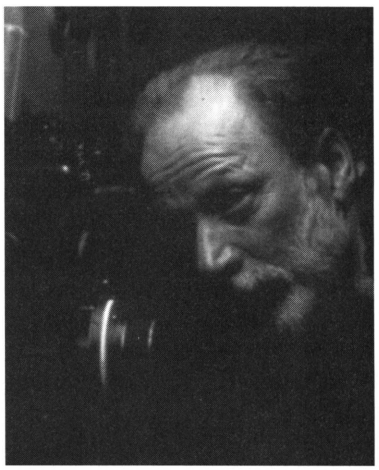
Emmy Award winner Joe Bauer says: "I have seen the Future, and so should you!"

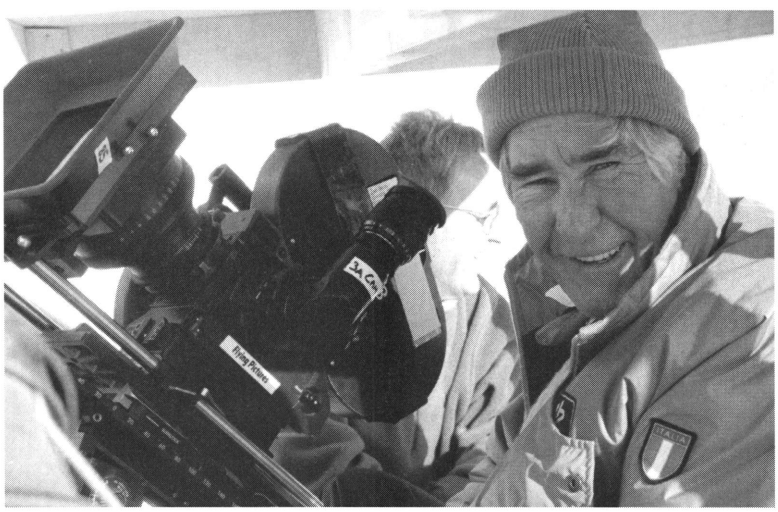
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A Golden Anniversary







Inventive cameramen such as Roger Deakins, ASC, BSC, Chris Menges, BSC and Alex Thomson, BSC have helped keep the Society creatively vital.

Pullman Everyman in Hampstead. These recently refurbished cinemas will be the venues for regular special BSC screenings, and often feature popular question-and-answer sessions with cinematographers organized by the Society. There are also imaginative (if embryonic) plans for a combined, specially designed BSC/public cinema.

As part of its anniversary celebrations, the Society commissioned a bronze sculpture of the pioneering inventor and camera patentee William Friese-Greene, by Diana Thomson, FRBS. Friese-Greene's patent no. 10,131 for an "Improved Apparatus for Taking Photographs in Rapid Series" was granted on May 10, 1890, and was the earliest patent for a cine camera designed for use with celluloid film. Four casts of the bust have been made, one for the BSC (to be displayed at Shepperton Studios), two for Panavision (in London and Los Angeles), and one for Fuji (at Pinewood). Marginally larger than life-size, it is a powerful work.

Several retired BSC members have written autobiographies that are notable for their personal insights into their working methods. Uniformly revealing, none can be described as a mere "coffee-table" publication. These books include *Magic Hour* (1996) by Jack Cardiff, *Are They Really So Awful?* (1995) by Chris Challis, and *Itinerant Cameraman* (1987) by Walter

The American Society of Cinematographers thanks The British Society of Cinematographers for 50 years of shared friendship and artistry.

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A Golden Anniversary

Lassally. Freddie Young's *Seventy Light Years* (as told to Peter Busby) was published posthumously by Faber this year. (Young — with Paul Petzold — had previously published *The Work of the Motion Picture Cameraman* in 1972.)

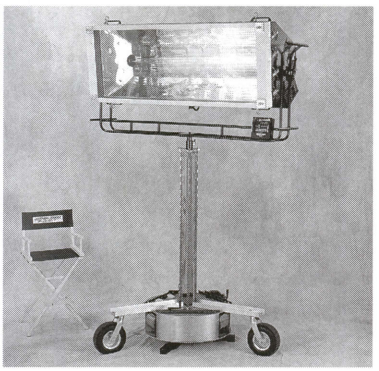
Movie productions are even more varied than they were when the BSC was founded in 1949, and production techniques have changed dramatically. Of the 68 British features (an increasingly difficult definition in such an international industry) made in 1998, more than a third were shot by BSC members. These include *Somme* by Tony Pierce-Roberts; *Ordinary Decent Criminal* by Andrew Dunn; *Bedrooms and Hallways* by Ashley Rowe; *The Debt Collector* by Dick Pope; *The Stringer* by Withold Stok; and *Notting Hill* by Mike Coulter. In addition, George Lucas's *Star Wars: Episode I — The Phantom Menace* was photographed by David Tattersall (all of the earlier *Star Wars* trilogy were also lit by BSC members: Gil Taylor, with Bruce Logan, on *Star Wars;* Peter Suschitzky on *The Empire Strikes Back* and Alan Hume on *Return of the Jedi*).

The proportion looks similar this year, with productions lit by members including Ridley Scott's *Gladiator* (John Mathieson); the latest James Bond film, *The World is Not Enough* (Adrian Biddle); *Gormenghast,* a major BBC series for the new millennium (Gavin Finney); a new version of Shakespeare's *Loves Labours Lost* (Alex Thomson); and *Five Seconds to Spare* (Ashley Rowe).

Fifty years after the formation of the British Society of Cinematographers, the initials "BSC" are recognized as a mark of expertise throughout the film industry. The anniversary events that took place in September served not only to celebrate the many achievements of both the BSC and its members, but also to herald the beginning of a new era for this remarkable organization. ■

New Products & Services

compiled by Douglas Bankston and Jay Holben

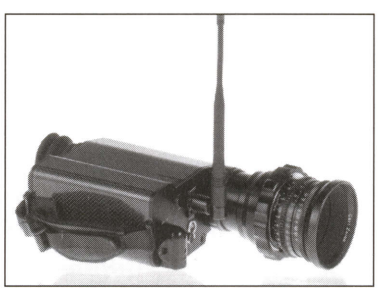


Soft, Bright Sources

Lightning Strikes introduces several new fixtures in their popular line of high-intensity sources. For their Soft Sun line, the Hollywood-based company has unveiled a new 10K fixture, a 5400°K AC source that will output 5,600 footcandles in full-spot mode from 10'. For their DC line of fixtures, the Soft Sun Directs, Lightning Strikes has developed three new sources: the 1.1K, 3.3K and 15K. All Lightning Strikes fixtures feature their ESL (Enhanced Spectrum Long Arc) lamps, which offer precise color rendering (CRI of 96) at 5400°K. The ESL is a modification of Xenon technology, featuring proprietary additives that eliminate the color spikes associated with HMI lamps and provide a smooth, even, daylight output. The ESLs have a dimming range from 5 to 100 percent and will maintain color temperature (with less than 200°K change) during the entire range, as well as throughout the lamp's life. All Lightning Strikes Soft Sun instruments carry no explosion hazard and employ shock-isolated lamp assemblies. (For information on Lightning Strikes' 50K constant source, see "New Products" in *AC* Mar. and Oct. 1998.)

Lightning Strikes has also unveiled a new concept in automated lifts: the Ribbonlift. Boasting an innovative design, this support arm consists of three rolls of brushed aluminum that unfurl from a single, triangular base by interlocking notched teeth on the sides of each ribbon — somewhat like a large triangular zipper. The Ribbonlift is offered as a system for supporting and elevating heavy HMI, tungsten and Xenon lights. Large instruments can be easily placed atop the Ribbonlift at the unit's 15" loading height, and then lifted straight up to 30'. The lift also features a digital readout of height in feet and inches, and offers memory capability for quick return to a preset height to facilitate quick gel or scrim changes. The platform, a 36" triangular base, rolls on three 12" pneumatic tires and provides 8' outriggers and automatic guy wires to ensure stability. The Ribbonlift accepts the standard 1⅛" junior pins.

Lightning Strikes, (323) 461-6361, fax (323) 641-3067, website: www.lightningstrikes.com.



Versatile Viewfinder

The Telefinder is a compact director's viewfinder which features a built-in color video tap and wireless transmitting capability. It is designed to accept Panavision or Arri PL-mount lenses and has an interchangeable ground glass. Both audio and video can be transmitted several hundred feet to a separate remote receiver. Video also can be delivered to a monitor through an external video output and a coaxial cable.

Also available as an accessory is a digital capture device that connects to the remote receiver. Still images can be taken from the video as JPEG files and stored on a 3.5" floppy disk. This will allow for video location scouting using a lens of choice, for the creation of lens-accurate video storyboards, or for the quick previsualization of shots during production. Audio notes can be recorded using the microphone built into the viewfinder housing.

Constructed of lightweight carbon fiber and aluminum, the Telefinder comes with a handstrap and handle to support larger lenses. The viewfinder is powered by an internal AA battery pack or through the external 12v 4-pin power port and 24v port.

Telefinder, (310) 372-8515, fax (310) 372-9669.

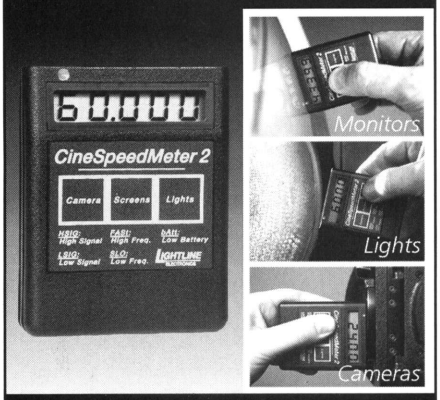
Complete Post Fine-Tuned for HD

After almost a year of use, Hollywood-based Complete Post reports that it is enjoying excellent success with its Panasonic HDTV postproduction editing and effects system. The facility has installed a full Panasonic HDTV system, including six AJ-HD2700 1080 Interlace/720 progressive switchable D-5 high-definition VTRs with AJ-DFC2000 480p downconverters; an AV-HS3100 1080i switcher with digital video effects; and three DT-M3050W 30" 16:9 multi-format monitors.

Complete Post's vice-president of engineering, Bob Blanks, reports that the AV-HS3100 has become a focal point of an emerging HD editorial suite, and its Panasonic D-5 HD VTRs have been integral to the success of the facility's growing HD telecine work for major studios. "The studios we service have a pretty firm commitment to the 1080i format, but we're happy that the D-5 HD VTRS can operate in a multi-image environment," says Blanks. "The facility will increasingly require the ability to easily switch

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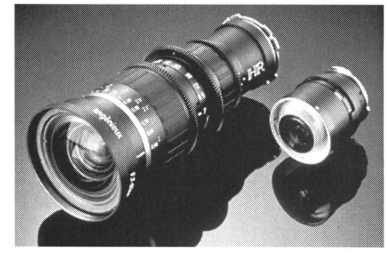
Blanks adds that he regards D-5 HD as an "excellent standard" widely accepted by the networks (ABC, CBS, PBS and Fox among them), and that he anticipates using the facility's AJ-HD2700s for program delivery to the networks in the upcoming television season. "The D-5 HD VTRs have performed really well," he says. "What has particularly impressed me is the high level of customer support. Panasonic has really turned around its service profile within the production community."

Blanks explains that the AV-HS3100 switcher was a key component of the Panasonic HDTV package. "Even though our HD editorial work is fairly basic," he recounts, "we needed a switcher with full-fledged DVE capabilities. We were one of the first customers for the switcher, and Panasonic has been very responsive to suggestions given by our editors."

The Panasonic HDTV equipment at Complete Post includes the AJ-HD2700, the only commercially-available digital component VTR with the capability of recording 1080i and 720p images. The AJ-HD2700 is based on Panasonic's D-5 format, which records high-definition signals using a full bandwidth recording system. The compact, 10-input AV-HS3100 1080i switcher with 100 wipe patterns offers three program outputs (three additional SDI outputs are optional) and a control display panel with digital effects generator capability. A wide variety of options are available, including a 1-channel digital effects generator, frame store, keyer, chroma key, shadow, PVW out, expanded wipe patterns, downstream keyer, 525i/625i board, FDD drive and network and analog output. The versatile DT-M3050W 30" 16:9 multi-format monitor is compatible with all ATSC image formats, including 480i, 480p, 720p, 1125i, NTSC, M-NTSC, PAL and SECAM. It is also capable of 4:3 image display.

Cine-style HD Lens

Angenieux's new 11.5 x 5.3 Cine Style HD lens for high-definition video cameras incorporates a variety of attributes normally found on high-end film lenses, such as large engravings, a calibrated double focus scale and iris T stops. The lens delivers distortion-free



images for optimal definition and image clarity across its 84-degree horizontal field by 11.5x zoom range with minimal breathing effect. Key features include a fast T1.9 aperture with minimum ramping, and a 0.6m minimum object distance measured from the film plane. The 11.5 x 5.3 is compatible with a variety of standard camera accessories.

Angenieux, (973) 812-3858, fax (973) 812-9050, e-mail: civ.sales@angenieux.com, website: www.angenieux.com.

Slim Brick Battery

Aspen Electronics of Huntington Beach, California, has unveiled the new NHP-65 Bantam Brick battery pack for broadcast cameras. At half the size of standard batteries, the NHP-65 provides 65 watts of power (14.4v/4.5 AmpHours) with a built-in precision digital gauge that displays the same run times as standard industry batteries, but with no memory effect.

Encased in a water-resistent ABS housing, the NHP-65 has the exclusive "A-Lock" mount system designed for easy "click-on" use and compatibility with all industry broadcast cameras. The brick pack also features the Aspen Cell Safe Technology, no-memory Panasonic cells and a built-in simultaneous power port for an onboard light. Dimensions of the NHP-65 are 5.25" high x 1.75" wide x 1.75" deep with a weight of 2.2 lbs.



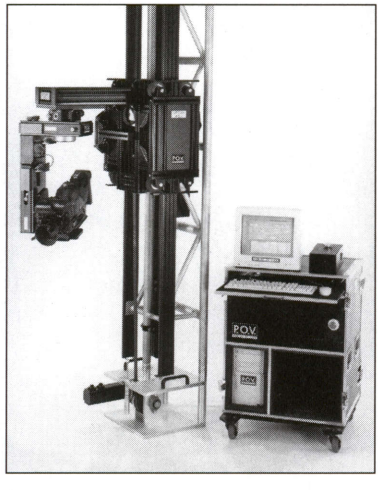
Maximum power is 8 amps at 100 watts.

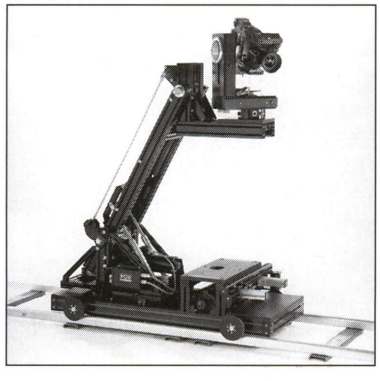
Aspen Electronics, Inc., (714) 379-2525, fax (714) 379-2517, e-mail: aspen@aspenelectronics.com, website: www.aspenelectronics.com.

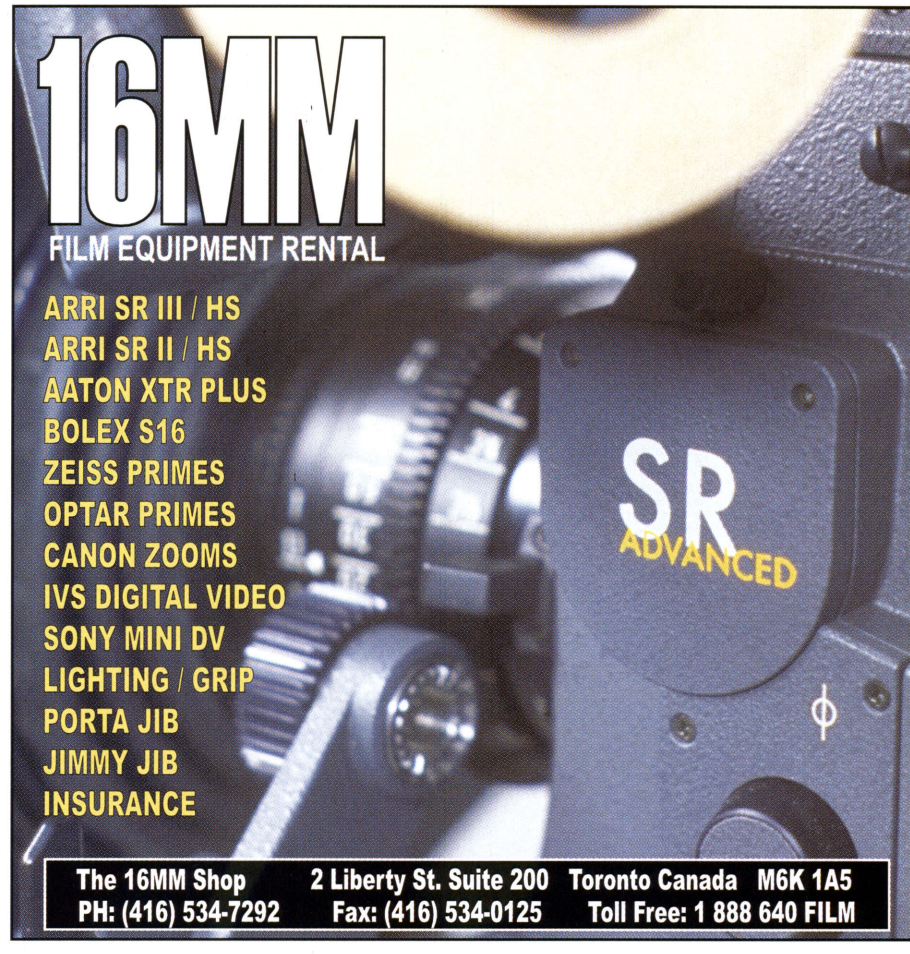
Motion-Control Options

The Liftcam is a vertical tracking system introduced by P.O.V. Media Marketing Company. The computer-assisted Liftcam allows horizontal, vertical and diagonal camera moves at speeds up to 1.2m per second. The dolly's position, speed, ramping and other functions can be completely pre-programmed. The Liftcam may be rented from Geo Film in Los Angeles. Contact George Nolan at (818) 376-6680.

Also from P.O.V. is the Cruisecam, a motor-assisted dolly running on standard straight tracks reaching a maximum speed of 15 mph. The Cruisecam can be coupled with the Cruisearm, a remote-controlled extendable lift arm that can boom up from a lens height of approximately 0.50m to 1.70m. The Cruisearm may be mounted on any other platform








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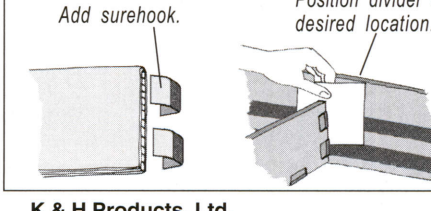
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Broadcast Eyepiece Extension

Band Pro Film/Video in Burbank has introduced the Abakus Eyepiece Extender, a cine-style accessory for broadcast cameras (including HD camcorders). The Abakus relays the viewfinder image closer to the operator's eye even while panning and tilting.

The Abakus connects to a standard viewfinder and interfaces with an Arriflex leveling arm just as it would on a standard 35mm camera setup. It has a 55mm diagonal field of view with an eyepiece adjustment of +/-4 diopters. Eye relief is 20mm.

Band Pro Film/Video Inc., (818) 841-9655, fax (818) 841-7649, e-mail: info@bandpro.com.

Flicker-Free Magnetic Ballasts

The Delta Group, based in Quebec, has introduced a new line of Purelite Flicker-Free Magnetic Ballasts. The flicker-free ballast system, though magnetic, is comparable to standard non-flicker-free ballasts in terms of reliability, and is particularly suited for HMI applications in powers ranging from 1.2K to 18K. The design offers quiet operation of the lamp not normally found in standard electronic square-wave ballasts, and is more immune to input voltage variations.

The Delta Group, (800) 663-3582, fax (877) 449-9115, website: www.delta.xfo.com

Movie Tech Now in Atlanta

Movie Tech, a professional camera support equipment company that puts an emphasis on safety and reliability, has announced the opening of a newly established North American subsidiary with offices located in Atlanta, Georgia. Claus H. Boelter was named vice president and heads up the operation. Phoenix and Felix cranes, Magnum dollies, as well as spare parts, are stocked in Atlanta for immediate service and delivery.

Movie Tech Inc., (770) 414-5650, fax (770) 934-3384.

Kodak Modifies Vision 200T

Based on recommendations from cinematographers, Kodak has modified the imaging characteristics of its Vision 200T 5274/7274 color negative film. The stock now has a lower contrast yet retains the imaging characteristics of the original Vision 200T negative. The "new-look" version will pick up more detail in the shadow areas and reproduce fleshtones more accurately.

The modification of the emulsion was a collaborative effort between Kodak and cinematographers, many of whom participated in shooting and evaluating tests.

The 200T is rated for an EI of 200 in 3200°K light and 125 in daylight (with a Kodak Wratten 85B color-correction filter on the camera lens). The new emulsion intercuts seamlessly with all other Kodak motion picture films.

Contact your local Kodak representative, or visit the company's website at www.kodak.com/go/motion.

Camera Cover

New from Los Angeles-based Coverit is a reusable, washable weather protection system to protect motion picture cameras from dust, moisture and other wind-blown elements. The system, designed by an assistant cameraman, comes in two parts: the 60" x 42" Camera Coverit that will fit over all cameras and the 30" x 26" Head Coverit. Both covers fold and fit into a small 9" x 9" storage pouch.

Coverits are made from water-repellent Rip-Stop Nylon and have a sturdy cord with cord locks to keep the covers in place. The covers, found in expendables stores, are available in red, blue, white, yellow, green and camouflage. They may be special-ordered in other materials and patterns to reflect particular themes, locales or extreme weather conditions.

Coverit, (562) 795-3018, fax (310) 417-8893. ■

TELEVISION ENTRY FORM
14TH ANNUAL ASC AWARDS
FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN CINEMATOGRAPHY DURING 1999

CRITERIA FOR TELEVISION ELIGIBILITY:

A program is eligible providing it was originally broadcast on television within the United States on a commercial network, a publicly sponsored broadcast system or cable outlet between **January 1, 1999** and **December 31, 1999.**

Programs originally exhibited in motion picture theaters, or initially sold or rented for viewing on home video equipment, are not eligible for awards in the television categories.

The definition of a regular comedy or drama series is a minimum of three original programs that aired during the awards year. The theme, story line or principal characters must be predominantly featured in multiple episodes. The series must be presented under the same title and each program must be related to the others. A series must have a continuity of executive supervision and/or production personnel so that it is thought of as a whole rather than individual parts. **To be eligible, the cinematographer must have completed at least two episodes out of the entire series, created and aired in the calendar period.** A group of programs that carry a main title (e.g. "tent" or "umbrella") but are, in fact, composed of various sub-units, will not be considered eligible as "a series."

The criteria for eligiblity in the mini-series, movie-of-the-week or pilot category is as follows:

A mini-series consists of two or more original programs based on a single theme, storyline or principal characters that tell one story with a beginning, a middle and an end. The mini-series must have aired during the awards year and may not be eligible for consideration in any other year. The episodes must be presented under the same title with a continuity of executive supervision and/or production personnel as defined in the preceding paragraph.

"Movies-of-the-week" or "pilots" are single original programs that are not segments of series and are broadcast in one part.

You may submit one entry per category. However, if you win for a pilot in the mini-series, movie of the week or Pilot category, you cannot win for the same program in the series category. (Entries will not be considered without accompanying tapes.)

ENTRY DEADLINE :

Monday, January 3, 2000
by 12:00 noon at the ASC clubhouse.

REQUIREMENTS:

A. **One entry form** per category.

B. (1) **¾-inch tape** of the **full program.**

C. (1) **¾-inch tape** with **a 4 minute excerpt.** Excerpts will contain scenes of no less than 1 minute. There can be no altering or cutting within a scene. Scenes must be continuous. **No credits are allowed on the excerpt.** They must be submitted with their original sound.

D. **A brief synopsis** of the project, no longer than 25 words.

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR ENTRY FORM.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, CONTACT:
ASC Awards Committee
Attention: Patty Armacost
P. O. Box 2230, Hollywood, California 90078
(323) 969-4333 ext. 103 or 1-800-448-0145
FAX: (323) 882-6391

**Theatrical motion pictures are chosen for judging under different criteria and are not included in this entry applica-*

ENTRY FORM FOR TELEVISION CATEGORIES

The deadline for receipt of entries is Monday, January 3, 2000 by 12:00 noon.

ONLY ONE ENTRY WILL BE ACCEPTED IN EACH CATEGORY.

A SEPARATE ENTRY FORM IS REQUIRED FOR EACH CATEGORY ENTERED.

THIS ENTRY FORM MUST BE COMPLETELY FILLED OUT TO BE VALID.

CATEGORIES (Check ONE box ONLY):

❑ **One episode of a regular series***
** To be eligible the cinematographer must have completed at least two episodes out of the entire series created and aired in the calendar period.*

❑ **One episode of a mini-series, movie-of-the-week or pilot**

Cinematographer

_____

Address

_____

_____

_____

Phone: (_____) _____

Agent or Agency

_____

Address

_____

_____

_____

Phone: (_____) _____

Title of Entry

_____
(Program within a series or mini-series, movie-of-the-week or pilot)

Title of Series or Miniseries

_____
(If applicable)

Program First Broadcast on

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Points East

TV Production Explodes in the Apple

by Eric Rudolph



Photo by Jessica Burstein, courtesy of NBC.

Shooting in the streets of NYC for the upcoming *Law & Order* spin-off *Special Victims Unit.*

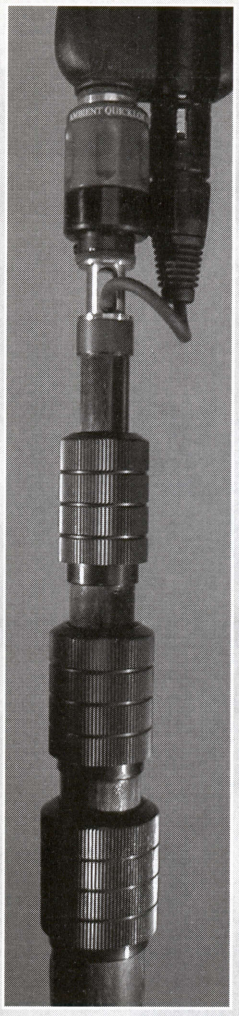
Prime-time programming generated in New York City has grown to a level not seen since the days of live television in the 1950s, when most network shows originated in the busy metropolis. The cleaner, safer and saner city is a popular place to be these days, and some of the top creative talent in the television industry is clamoring to work here.

This trend certainly hasn't been hurt by the recent success of New York-produced shows such as HBO's *The Sopranos* (see full story on page 62), *Law & Order* (now in its 10th season) and *Spin City* (the first multi-camera filmed sitcom made in New York since *Sergeant Bilko* in the '50s). Also hot are HBO's *Oz* (see Production Slate, Aug. '99) and *Sex and the City,* both of which are single-camera shows filmed in 16mm. Other positive factors include the deep pool of on- and offscreen talent residing in the Five Boroughs area, a stable union climate (including a steady pay scale and flexible work rules), and a booming economy.

Patricia Reed Scott, Chairman of the Mayor's Office of Film, Television and Broadcasting, credits *Law & Order* and *The Sopranos* for turning the production heat up to a boil. Scott explains, "First-class writers are heartened by the uncharacteristic success of *Law & Order*, which has gotten better when conventional wisdom says that after numerous, continual cast changes and 10 full seasons, the show should be running out of gas. That series and *The Sopranos,* which is the best show I've seen in many years, illustrate that good work can be done here."

Manhattan's hectic pace and lively, sometimes startling street life and diversity also contribute to its vitality as

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a filmmaking venue. "New York City is unquestionably a stimulating environment that has a lot to offer producers," Scott mused. "The city has unlimited resources for story settings and ideas, while the pool of up-and-coming onscreen talent, nurtured by the theater, helps keep New York shows fresh and interesting."

Jim Finnerty, an executive producer on *Homicide* and the new UPN show *The Beat,* agrees. In blunt New York-ese, he notes that *The Beat* is being filmed in NYC because "the guys who write the script set it in New York, and there's only one New York. Others try to fake it in Canada, but they're not very successful."

Finnerty knows of what he speaks: he worked as a New York-based key grip for 20 years on 125 features, collaborating with such ASC fellows as Victor Kemper, John Bailey and Sven Nykvist before moving up the production ranks. Other reasons to work in New York, he says, are the "great crews and the unions, which have given up a lot to bring more work to town." Finnerty himself survived many lean days of film production here during his days as a crew member.

Key union concessions that came on the heels of the infamous production boycott of the early 1990s (spurred by the then-runaway costs of working in New York) include a provision that allows production to take place during any five days of the week. That opened up the weekends for filming at locations that are overly crowded on weekdays, such as Wall Street. Union pay scales have also remained steady for years. These bottom-line factors have helped make New York, which has characteristically been an expensive place to film, more competitive with Canada and Los Angeles.

While studio space in New York is nearly filled to capacity, there are still ways to procure large-scale production facilities. *The Beat* will be filming some interiors in a decommissioned firehouse on the Lower East Side, and the building's exterior has been remodeled to stand in for the show's police station.

In a clever cost- and space-saving move, additional sets for *The Beat* will be built over the huge standing sets used for HBO's *Oz,* which wraps production just as most shows are getting ready to start. Before *The Beat* was given its go-ahead, the 65,000-square-foot *Oz* space stood unused, with the show's complex sets remaining in place from season to season.

The reason most filmed shows come to New York is to capture the authentic flavor of the colorful, congested streets. "We're not locked into locations for two weeks or more at a time, the way features are," says Finnerty. "We're in and out of most locations in a couple of hours."

Scott concurs, and while she states that "delivering locations is our biggest challenge," she also maintains that the demands of neighborhood residents, who often find the shoots disruptive, "can and will be met." To help soothe problems as they arise, Scott has added four field representatives to her team. These staffers conduct advance community relations work, and then stay on site during shoots to help iron out any problems that may arise.

In addition to *The Beat,* a slew of other new shows is also set to film in the city. NBC's *Third Watch,* a series from *ER* executive producer John Wells, will chronicle the lives of cops, firefighters and paramedics. CBS's *Now & Again,* photographed by Ken Kelsch, ASC (*Big Night, The Addiction*), concerns a critically injured, middle-aged man whose brain is transplanted into the body of a much younger man. In NBC's *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit,* standup comedian-turned-actor Richard Belzer reprises his popular *Homicide* role as Detective John Munch. Midseason entries include ABC's *Bellevue,* created by *Chicago Hope*'s Peter Berg and set in the famed psychiatric ward at Bellevue Hospital, and ABC's *Talk to Me,* starring Kyra Sedgwick as a radio talk-show host.

Meanwhile, at press time, CBS's *Falcone,* a series based on the feature film *Donnie Brasco,* had shot its pilot in New York and was negotiating to remain in the Apple. ■

Books in Review

by Ray Zone

Principal Photography
by Vincent LoBrutto
Praeger Publishers
264 pps, cloth ($65)
or paper ($22.95)
ISBN 0-275-94954-0

There are few books that deal with cinematographers and their work, and *Principal Photography* is a must for anyone with an interest in the subject. As he did in his previous Praeger books on film editors, production designers and sound experts, *AC* contributor Vincent LoBrutto has assembled here a series of Q&A-style interviews with prominent directors of photography. A total of 13 cameramen are included in the book; all save one are ASC members, and the roll-call comprises an "A-list" of practicing cinematographers.

LoBrutto's intent with this book was "to allow cinematographers to speak in their own words about the art and craft of cinematography." In general, this collection provides an excellent overview of how cinematic language was rewritten in the 1960s and '70s, when natural light and more portable equipment were used to create contemporary imagery that reflected the rapidly changing times and technology.

Each chapter opens with an overview of the individual cameraman's career and a filmography. LoBrutto has presented his interview subjects in an order that "attempts to give a historical, developmental scope," and assists the reader in "seeing the many connections among these diverse individuals and their work." Fittingly, the first interview in the book is with Conrad Hall ASC, who earned an Oscar for *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* in 1969, and the ASC Lifetime Achievement Award in 1992. Hall's naturalistic yet expressive approach to his work has had a major influence on contemporary cinematography.

LoBrutto knows the right questions to ask, and he successfully probes the sharp minds of his subjects. Here, for example, is Hall speaking about some of his technical breakthroughs: "I soon learned I could take flares and out-of-focus shots, which used to be called mistakes, and use them creatively to appropriately enhance and beautify the story. I observed naturalistic rules and realistic sensibilities, and bit by bit I became more adept at breaking the rules and still telling the story well."

Gordon Willis, ASC, who earned the ASC's Lifetime Achievement Award in 1995, provides insights into his work on the *Godfather* films, and summarizes his theories about image size and contrast in pithy fashion: "I'm a great believer in big and small, light and dark." In every interview, LoBrutto demonstrates great familiarity with both the craft of cinematography and his subject's body of work in the field.

Other interview subjects include ASC members John Bailey, Dean Cundey, Allen Daviau, Fred Elmes, Adam Holender, Edward Lachman, Don McAlpine, Miroslav Ondricek, Lisa Rinzler and Sandi Sissel, as well as ASC associate member Garrett Brown.

This book will assist the reader in developing a more critical eye for film, and it will certainly encourage a re-examination of the many films discussed in its pages.

[Ed. note: LoBrutto's biography of the late Stanley Kubrick was reviewed in this column in our Feb. '97 issue; he also penned this month's historical on *A Clockwork Orange*, which begins on page 52.]

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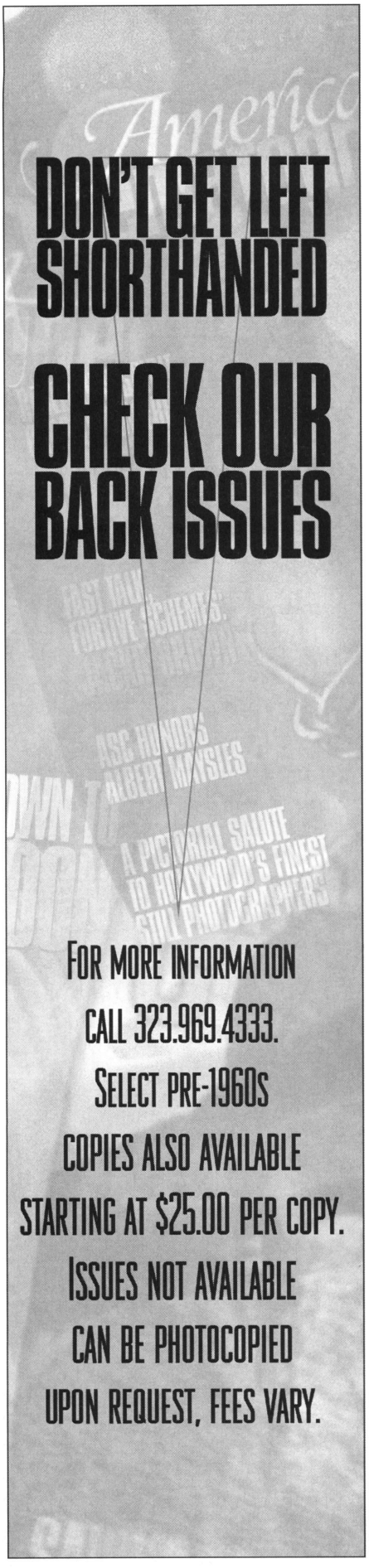
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Star Wars: The Making of Episode I — The Phantom Menace
by Laurent Bouzereau and Jody Duncan
Ballantine Publishing
164 pps, paper ($19.95)
ISBN 0-345-43119-7

One of four titles about the film *Star Wars: Episode I* from the Ballantine Del Rey Books division, this one features a comprehensive behind-the-scenes look at the production of writer/director George Lucas's long-awaited prequel. Explaining the 16-year gap between *Return of the Jedi* and *The Phantom Menace,* Lucas offers, "I waited until I had the technological means to do it."

After the success of the original *Star Wars* trilogy, Lucas's Industrial Light & Magic became the premier visual effects company for motion pictures. When ILM successfully produced digital dinosaurs for *Jurassic Park* in 1993, Lucas realized that the time was right to begin work on the first of three *Star Wars* prequels. By 1994, he had assembled a preproduction team and begun writing the script for *Episode I.*

Lucas's 1992 TV series *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles* also had a huge impact on *Episode I.* "*Young Indy* was a testing bed to learn a new way of making films," according to producer Rick McCallum. These new methods included keeping sets in place to allow for reshooting after the completion of principal photography, as well as a significant application of digital technology. McCallum elaborates, "Overall, we started to set the boundaries of nonlinear filmmaking — changing things, and creating new environments like a painter does."

For Lucas, the key advantage of this new nonlinear model of filmmaking was that he could continue to revise his screenplay throughout production and even during the editing stage. "I could completely reconstruct and rewrite the story," Lucas explains. Even after a rough cut of the film had been assembled, the director could shoot additional footage with principal actors. The picture's original sets were still in place, and the actors' contracts were structured to keep the players available if Lucas needed them.

All of the principal photography on *Phantom Menace* was created with digital postproduction in mind. In fact, approximately 75 percent of the scenes shot included some bluescreen work. A relatively short period of 65 days was allotted for production at Leavesden Studios in London and on location in Italy and Tunisia. Each day, the cast and crew completed about 36 camera setups. Even after a storm in Tunisia destroyed the sets and costumes, the crew maintained that average and stayed on schedule.

As a test, Lucas and McCallum shot a few scenes on high-definition digital tape and cut those back-to-back with images on film to compare resolution and quality. "From here on out," declares McCallum, "we're no longer going to shoot with film — it will be a totally digital thing. No film cameras will be involved at all."

Indeed, *Episode I* is a landmark in digital filmmaking. Of the completed film's 2,200 shots, some 1,900 include digital effects work. Motion-control cameras and motion-capture techniques were used extensively to smoothly integrate digital and photographic imagery.

Very well illustrated with color art and photography on almost every page, *Star Wars: The Making of Episode I* includes a list of complete credits from the film, which runs for 10 full pages. ■

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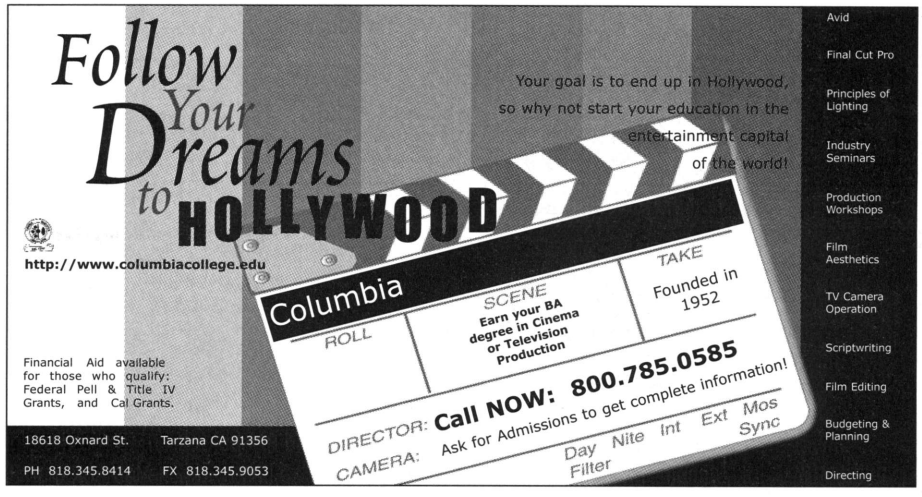
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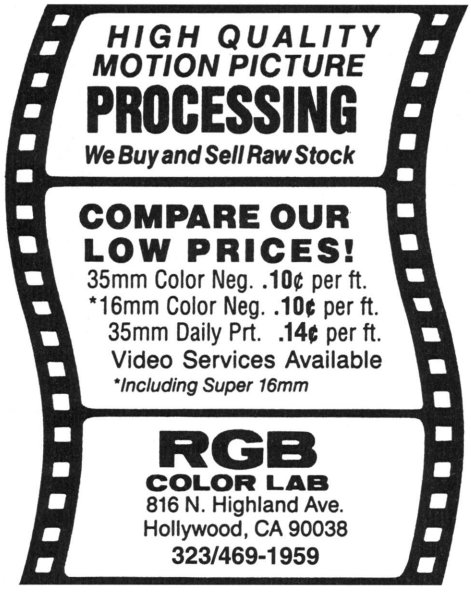
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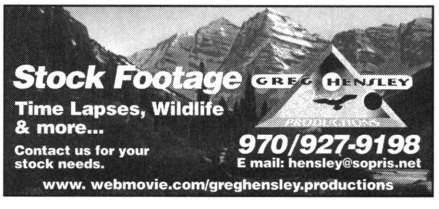
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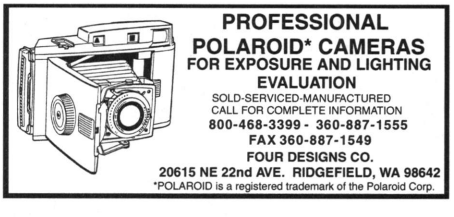
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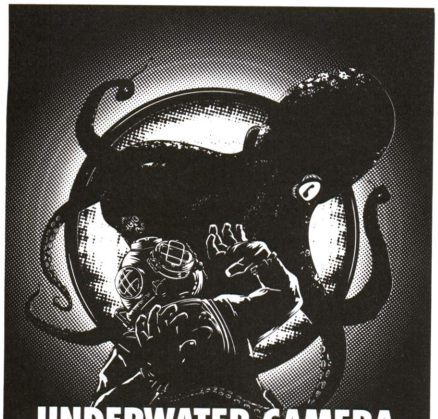
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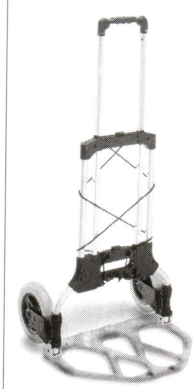
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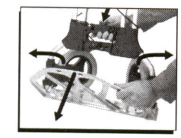
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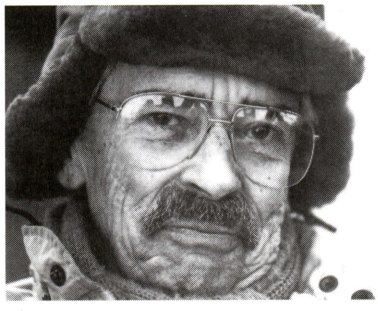
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In Memoriam



Jacques Marquette, ASC, who shot a number of films and television shows now regarded as "kitsch classics," passed away on July 12, 1999, at the age of 84.

Marquette came to Hollywood from Brooklyn, New York, shortly after his birth in 1915. His first foray into film photography involved helping his brother, Joseph, a staff newsreel photographer for Universal Newsreel, cover events such as the 1933 Long Beach earthquake, and a speech by then-Secretary of the Navy Franklin D. Roosevelt after the completion of the Boulder Dam. In 1936, Marquette ventured into laboratory work with Technicolor, and later with Pathé and Cinecolor. He subsequently became an assistant cameraman with 20th Century Fox, and began a steady ascent through the ranks.

Marquette eventually operated for Lloyd Ahern, ASC, and for Ted McCord, ASC, on *The Helen Morgan Story*. He stepped up into the director of photography role after forming his own production outfit, Marquette Productions, Inc.

Under this company banner, he produced and photographed such pop-culture artifacts as *Attack of the 50-Foot Woman*, *Brain from Planet Arous* and *Teenage Monster* (the latter of which he also directed). But Marquette found producing to be "a hard way to make a living," and decided to devote his career to cinematography. This led to a long list of feature film credits, including *Burnt Offerings*, *Return to Macon County*, *Fuzz* and the Elvis Presley films *Frankie and Johnny* and *The Trouble With Girls* (also known as *Chautauqua*). Complementing his feature career was an extensive amount of television work, including stints with *The Patty Duke Show*, *That Girl*, *The Streets of San Francisco*, *Hawaii Five-O*, as well as numerous television movies.

Marquette became a member of the ASC in 1966 upon the recommendations of Society fellows Lester Shorr and Frank Phillips. He was the recipient of the ASC gold card celebrating 25 years as an active member. He is survived by his wife, Mona; his sons, Jack Jr., Michael and Jim; and his daughters, Laura Warner and Julie Marquette. At the request of his family, anyone wishing to make a donation in his memory may do so to the Motion Picture and Television Fund.

— Douglas Bankston

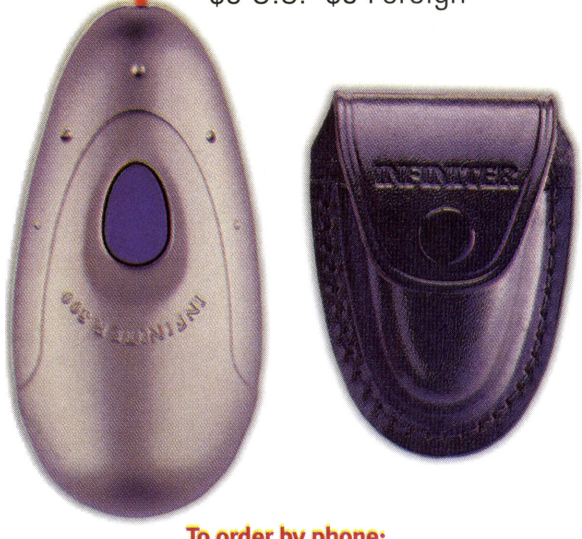
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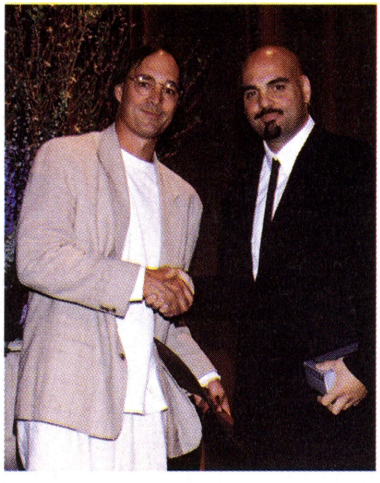


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From the Clubhouse



David A. Armstrong is presented with the ASC Student Film Award by Russell Carpenter, ASC.

American Film Institute graduate David A. Armstrong received the inaugural ASC Student Film Award at the 26th annual Student Academy Awards held on June 13 at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences. Armstrong was selected for his cinematography on the 21-minute color short *John* by a panel of cinematographers comprised of members of both the ASC and the Academy.

Society vice president Russell Carpenter, ASC, last year's Academy and ASC Award-winner for *Titanic*, presented the award. Carpenter commented, "Over the past several years, the ASC has invited each group of Student Academy Award winners over to the Clubhouse during their stay in Los Angeles, giving these directors a chance to sit around a table with prominent cinematographers and discuss their work. But as gratifying as it has been for the ASC to help establish a collaborative mindset with these future directors, we felt there would be great benefit in encouraging the student cinematographers who actually shoot these films. Thankfully, the Academy felt the same way."

The 36-year-old Armstrong states that it has been his life-long goal to become a cinematographer. "It was my uncle who gave me the idea to become a cinematographer," he recalls. "As a child growing up in Santa Barbara, my grandfather had an old still camera that I would use to shoot pictures. My uncle came up to me and said, 'Well, why don't you become a cinematographer? You're always taking pictures. You love images. You collect movies.' It made perfect sense."

After continuing his shutterbug fascination throughout high school, Armstrong attended the film program at the California Institute of the Arts. Upon graduating with a BA in 1988, he began working on independent films as a production assistant while maintaining a job at a local still-camera store. Through work, Armstrong met his first mentor, Roy Wagner, ASC. "Roy was very kind and offered me the chance to come down to the set and watch him work," said Armstrong. "After I was there all week, he turned to his assistants and said, 'I want him to learn how to do all of this.' After that, I'd work eight hours at the camera store, and as soon as I got off, I'd go work on the set until they wrapped, which was usually at 11 or 12 at night."

Wagner eventually helped Armstrong get into the International Cinematographers Guild Local 600, and hired him as a loader while he was shooting a pilot entitled *Jack's Place,* which starred Hal Linden. Over the next 10 years, the aspiring cameraman worked as a second assistant, first assistant, and camera operator on a number of films. "Being a director of photography, I sometimes forget why things now come to me naturally," he reflects. "Because I was an assistant, the familiarity of figuring out problems on set has really paid off in terms of being confident as a cinematographer. I love the challenge of unknowns and figuring out how I'm going to light something."

In 1996, Armstrong elected to leave his lucrative assisting career and enrolled himself in the AFI's master's program. The cinematographer's thesis project was *John*, a simple story about a men's bathroom attendant who thinks he is going to lose his job — a belief that turns out to be a misunderstanding. The story reveals that John is not only a very kind man, but also very wealthy. One of the perks of his attendant job is overhearing horse race and stock tips, which he takes advantage of in the best way possible.

Filming on location at Mateo's restaurant in Westwood, California, Armstrong sought to infuse the short with a polished quality, while working on a tight schedule. He elaborates: "I wanted to give the film a real rich, sort of Italian, *GoodFellas* feel — to let things fall off and not be afraid of shadows and deep blacks. This was the first film on which I used Vision 320T 7277 stock, but my AFI instructor, Bill Dill, was the best possible mentor. If I had a question, I knew I could always ask Bill. I decided to shoot the film on 77 because the latitude on the film is so great. That enabled me to shoot the film without any fill. The ambient light falling on the dark side of the actor's faces showed up on the film. That allowed me to move quicker, and my lighting setups weren't very complicated."

For the restaurant scenes, practical lamps with 75-watt PH-211 bulbs were placed on each table and controlled by almost 30 small hand-squeezer dimmers that Armstrong built himself. "If any of these lights were seen on camera," he explains, "I'd dim them down somewhat and then put a little ND on the camera side of the shade. That appropriately created a really rich look."

— Christopher Probst

Photo courtesy of AMPAS.

WRAP SHOT



Unsatisfied with the quality of the kinescopes that would otherwise carry *I Love Lucy* episodes to affiliates, Desilu Productions opted to shoot the show on 35mm film — but in front of an audience to lend the show a "live" feel. To accomplish the "immediacy" look, director of photography Karl Freund, ASC blended traditional motion picture photography with the style and technique of live television.

Though three-camera setups and shooting on film are commonplace in the production of today's sitcoms, few current shows can measure up to the efficiency employed on *I Love Lucy,* the television classic that started it all.

Lucy was filmed with such speed and precision that executives from nearly every Hollywood studio "scouted" it. The independent Desilu Productions show, which ran from 1951 to '57, tried to retain the feel of a live television program while maintaining top picture quality and flawless performances. This daunting photographic chore fell on the shoulders of Oscar-winning cinematographer Karl Freund, ASC, who took the science of a multi-camera filmed show and elevated it to a precise art form.

With feature credits such as *The Good Earth* (for which he earned an Academy Award), *Metropolis*, *Dracula*, and *Key Largo*, the Bohemia-born Freund was one of the few cinematographers to witness the beginnings of silent pictures, talkies, color, and television. He had a hand in the development process of each. "Putting a show on film, you can plan and cut, which you can't do with a live show," Freund told *American Cinematographer* (in January of 1952). "Also, you avoid the flubs that are bound to happen on live shows."

Three Mitchell BNC cameras, mounted on dollies adapted from standard live television show practices, were used to shoot the action simultaneously and in chronological order to retain *Lucy*'s live-show illusion. The center camera handled all master shots using a 40mm wide-angle lens, while the cameras on either side focused on close-ups using three- and four-inch lenses. The average time between setups was only a minute and a half, thanks in large part to the simple lighting arrangement. "To light a set for three cameras operating simultaneously and from different positions is a problem in itself," Freund said. "We have to light as uniformly as possible, yet watch for opportunities to add highlights whenever we can."

Seniors and converted Pans with spun glass diffusers were rigged on catwalks above the show's main set, which depicted the apartment of Ricky and Lucy Ricardo (Desi Arnaz and Lucille Ball). These fixtures were never changed except through dimming. The only floor-level illumination came from portable fill lights mounted above the camera matte boxes, minimizing the number of cables on the stage floor.

The meticulous planning of *I Love Lucy* allowed the 22-minute show to be filmed in only 60 minutes in front of a live television audience every Friday, beginning at 8 p.m. Major responsibility was placed on the camera operators to get each take right the first time, every time. Thanks to careful rehearsals and thorough chalk marks on the floor noting every camera position and focus distance for each setup, retakes were rare. On average, each episode used on average a mere 7,500' of 35mm film. "What we are striving to do," said Freund, "is establish a standard that will please the television industry."

What Freund did with *I Love Lucy* was to set a precedent of success for television production itself.

— Douglas Bankston

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